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THE SPECTATOR

WINTER MAGAZINE JANUARY 1985

THE ISSUE OF FRATERNITIES

Frats at Hamilton

A resurgence of fraternities and sororities is occurring across the nation, but Hamilton still seems to be wrestling with certain issues raised by the presence of Greek houses on the Hill. The administration pursues a hands-off policy towards the organizations, and is actively trying to provide fair alternatives for people who remain independent. Fraternities cite their valuable contributions to aspects of life at Hamilton, yet their critics feel that Greek organizations are sexist, elitist, and somewhat racist, and find their continued existence on the Hill a threat to Hamilton's coeducational experience. The Spectator interviewed fraternity and sorority members, students-at-large, and faculty members and administrators in an attempt to provide a fair representation of our community's views toward frats. **Page 6**

A Remembrance

Last year in June the world learned of the death of Jennifer Lynn Rubin in the village of Defale in Togo, West Africa. As a Peace Corps volunteer and as a student at Hamilton, Jenni always shared herself with others. She was the kind of person who did not wait for life to begin, but seized life and cherished it. Jenni was an optimist. She maintained an unflagging commitment to her vision of the way the world ought to be, something we shall also miss when we remember her. **Page 20**

Down in Africa

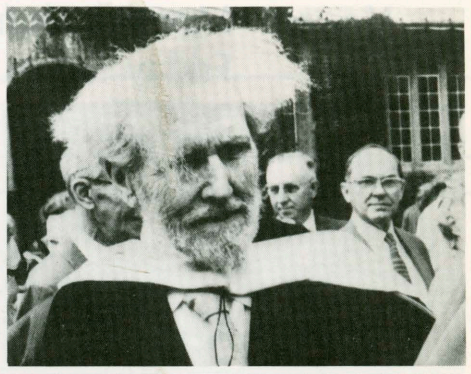
Life in Kenya is marked by high unemployment, drought, famine, and a regime that is seemingly unmindful of the needs of its constituents. Interracial tension runs as high as the inflation rate, and the annual population growth of four percent is the highest in the world. President Moi has successfully quashed one attempted coup, and the village women consider him to be out of favor with God, and blame him for the current drought. Our report is from an interning Hamilton student. **Page 12**

Our Abecedarian

Do you know this man? You should. His name is Robert L. Simon, William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of Philosophy and chair of the Philosophy Department. He is also this year's Abecedarian of the Year. His achievements as author, teacher and amateur golfer are herein documented, along with his insights into the nature of students and other strangers here at Hamilton. **Page 17**

Pound's Twisted Genius

Ezra Pound was graduated from Hamilton in 1905, and went on to become one of the most influential and controversial figures in 20th century literature and politics. This spring, the College will host a conference on the occasion of the centenary of his birth. Our story asks certain questions. Is it possible to separate Pound's political beliefs from his literary merits? **Page 31**



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•About this Issue•

In this the eleventh appearance of The Spectator's annual Winter Magazine, we have chosen to extend our coverage of Hamilton life well beyond College Hill. This choice reflects our view of what Winter Term offers to Hamilton students. Many students spend the month of January away from the College either serving internships, or savoring a well-earned respite in their senior year. The rest of us spend the term engaged in the intensive study of one discipline, study that closely resembles advanced seminar-level work. The J-Term experience is a refreshing departure from the normal rigors of full-semester academic pursuits. It gives us a chance to experiment, to experience life outside the classroom. With this in mind, we have sought to create a Winter Magazine worthy of its name.

At press time, we anticipate delivery by the beginning of spring semester classes. Production time for the magazine is necessarily greater than for the weekly newspaper; thus the nature of the articles we have chosen is limited, but certainly not *limiting*.

Cover photo by Brooks Donnelly

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•THE SPECTATOR•

WINTER MAGAZINE JANUARY 1985

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Sexual Harassment Board Findings

Editor's note: The following is the Sexual Harassment Grievance Board's report on its activities for the academic year 1983-84. The report is required of the board each year, and is submitted to the President of the College. Regretfully, we have neglected to make the report public until this time.

Activities

Counsel and Information (informal): 9 cases.
One case of informal mediation.

All instances of informal counsel and mediation were initiated by students. Three were complaints about faculty behavior in the classroom, but none of these students decided to pursue the matter. The other six incidents were student-to-student problems; one student reported that she dealt directly with the problem herself, and in two other cases the students decided to seek assistance via the regular disiplinary system. We do not know what happened in the remaining two student-to-student incidents. The informal mediation involved a group of students rather than an individual.

Formal complaints: 3 cases.

In each of these cases, formal complaints were preceded by informal counsel with a board member other than the Chair, but these incidents of counsel were not included in the preceding section.

In one case, the responsible Officer of the College found the complaint of sexual harassment ambiguous, but took action on the grounds related to improper performance of duties. The second complaint was withdrawn because the act of filing the complaint and the attention of the board and the Officer of the College prompted the accused to cease harassment; when the accused agreed to seek professional psychological counseling, the complainant withdrew. The responsible Officer of the College judged the third complaint to be vaild and took disciplinary action.

In addition, the Chair discussed the procedures for formal complaint with two people who decided not to pursue them. The Chair has no knowledge of why the complaints were not filed.

Kinds of Behavior that Gave Rise to Complaints

In all cases of formal and informal counsel and complaint, complainants were women and the accused were men. In two cases of possible formal complaints, in which individuals sought information but did not proceed, complainants were male; the gender of the potential accused is unknown.

Most informal complaints were associated with conduct that had the "purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working, educational or social environment" (Procedures, p.1).

Of the formal complaints, one was similar to the informal, but behavior had become so extreme that formal action was necessary. The other two formal complaints involved the abuse of authority through sexual advances toward subordinates.

In all cases of formal and informal counsel or complaint, complainants acted on what they perceived to be extreme intolerable behavior. All allegations were serious, and the board has seen absolutely no sign of petty nuisance complaints or of attempt to use the board for other than its stated purposes.

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Meeting the Hoyas

After watching the Georgetown Hoyas destroy the Depaul Blue Demons by twenty points on national television, I got to thinking. I closed my eyes and thought, what would happen if our own Hamilton Continentals took on the mighty Hoyas?

As I began to ponder the scenario, I found myself at the Capital Center in Landover, Maryland, about to witness the very first meeting between Georgetown and our own Buff-n-Blue.

The air was thick with smoke and anticipation as the teams emerged from their locker rooms for pre-game warm-ups. A capacity crowd jammed the arena, and Al McGuire could be heard, throughout the nation, explaining that Hamilton was a small Division III school near Colgate.

At one end of the court were the defending national champion Hoyas (the Big East lets their schools play in post-season tournaments), dressed in snazzy white warm-ups. The players joked and grinned as they went through layups half speed, demonstrating the new finger rolls they learned this past summer on the Washington, DC playgrounds.

Behind the Georgetown basket was their student section, with the entire student body present. They all wore blue shirts and waved pom-poms and pieces of white bread. The Hoya band was situated right in the middle of this throng, playing some goose bump-inducing fight song. At the other end of the red, white, and blue-trimmed hardwood were the visiting Continentals. The boys from Clinton looked serious as they went through their traditional three-man weave. Several Hamilton players had shed their baby blue, pajama-like warm-up tops and some even the navy blue shooting shirts they wear underneath. Coach North lit his pipe nervously on the sidelines, while Coach Roth tried to sneak behind Al McGuire and get on TV.

Of course not all of the 19,000 plus in the building were Georgetown fans. Hamilton was allotted 500 tickets, and behind the Hamilton basket sat the DU's and DKE's, the swim team, Professor Millar, and Professor Simon. Maybe they didn't use all the tickets.

When the huge scoreboard that hangs high above the court showed five minutes until tipoff, the referees called the captains to center court.

"Mr. Kollath, Mr. Isaf, Mr. Hayden, this is Mr. Ewing," said the ref.

The Hamilton captains seemed awed by the 7-foot monster as the ref doled out instructions. When the ref's speech ended, the captains returned to their teams, and moments later, the horn sounded, signalling the teams to their benches for final instructions.

"Ladies and gentlemen," boomed the PA announcer, "welcome to the beautiful Capital Center for tonight's game between the Hamilton Continentals, and *your* Georgetown Hoyas." The crowd exploded as it rose in unison. The Georgetown cheerleaders ran onto the court followed by seven or eight effeminate looking males doing flips and shouting into a megaphone. The Georgetown mascot danced over to the Hamilton bench flailing his arms. Oh no, I thought to myself, we'll never win now, some guy dressed as a dog just put a hex on us.

"And now let's meet the starting lineups," the announcer continued. "For Hamilton, a 5-9 guard, Kevin Hayden." Chants of "So what?" filled the court, as Hayden trotted onto the floor. "For Georgetown, a 6-1 guard, Michael Jackson." The Hoya band blared the song "Thriller" as Jackson high-fived Hayden and each trotted to opposite free throw lines. "For Hamilton. . ." You couldn't hear Continental guard Don O'Shaugnessy's name over the boos. And so it went: John Cavanaugh,

The referees called the captains to center court. "Mr. Kollath, Mr. Isaf, Mr. Hayden, this is Mr. Ewing." The Hamilton captains seemed awed by the 7-foot monster.

Izzy Perez, Larry Kollath. Boo. Booer, Booest. The crowd was slightly partisan.

The national anthem was played, and the starting units walked towards the jump ball circle, exchanging hand slaps and "good lucks." The Buff-and-Blue players looked small next to the Georgetown squad—probably because they were. They also looked especially white. Even Kevin Hayden.

The ref stepped into the circle and tossed the ball into the air. Ewing soared over Cavanaugh and batted the ball to his left. The roundball proceeded to carom off the head of Hamilton Sports Information Director John Webber who was as the scorer's table. Hamilton ball. The in-bounds pass went to Hayden, who set up the play for the blue-clad Clintonites. "Passing offense" yelled Hayden as Georgetown came out man-to-man.

The initial pass went to Perez on the left wing, who whipped it over to O'Shaughnessy at the top of the key. Free for the instant, Donny O. launched a 20-footer.

Swish. Hamilton 2-0.

The Hamilton fans went crazy. Matt "Mort" Hulbert jumped down from the stands and led a gimme a H-A-M-I-L-T-O-N cheer. Several students unfurled a banner which read: "Pat Ewing *can* read this. . .but not much else!!" Always original we Hamilton students.

In the meantime the Hoyas brought the ball up court facing a packed 2-1-2 zone. Make them shoot from the outside was the reasoning. The ball sped around the perimeter as Kollath elbowed and shoved Ewing for position. After four or five passes, Hoya guard David Wingate dumped it into Ewing who turned and popped from ten feet. The ball rolled of the rim and Kollath snagged the rebound. They're not so bad I thought.

Hayden dribbled it up slowly, stalked by Jackson. "Four!" screamed Coach Murphy. "Four!" ordered Hayden as the Continentals went into their four-corner delay game. Take the air out of the ball, it was our only chance.

A flick of Jackson's hand became a steal and two points. Georgetown pressed—steal, basket. Again—steal, dunk. Two more steals and two more dunks made it 8-2 and brought on a "Jesus Christ!" from Murphy and a Buff-n-Blue time out.

Whatever pearls of wisdom Murphy had used to spur his troops against the likes of Albany State and RIT were useless here. The halftime scoreboard read 70-19.

The second half was not much better. Georgetown cleared their bench early. Hoya Coach John Thompson even considered putting a white kid in, until he remembered he doesn't recruit white kids.

The Continentals played hard though, and the game was a lot closer than the 139-46 final score would indicate. If we hit our foul shots at the end we would have only lost by ninety.

The game over, I came out of my self-induced fog feeling like Dorothy in Kansas on the morning after. Sure, I realized, we lost to the defending national champions by 93 points, but so what? We play a different brand of ball at Hamilton. We don't lower our admission standards in order to land 7-foot centers. We don't sacrifice our academic integrity to make millions in the "big time."

Of course no one could say that playing sports doesn't help someone get into Hamilton. It does. But the key is that it helps *students* get into Hamilton.

So Division III Hamilton would lose to Division I Georgetown. It really doesn't matter, because in the long run we're better off. We have nothing to be ashamed of.■

Mike Lombardi has been sports editor of The Spectator since February of 1984.

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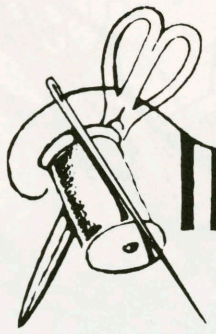

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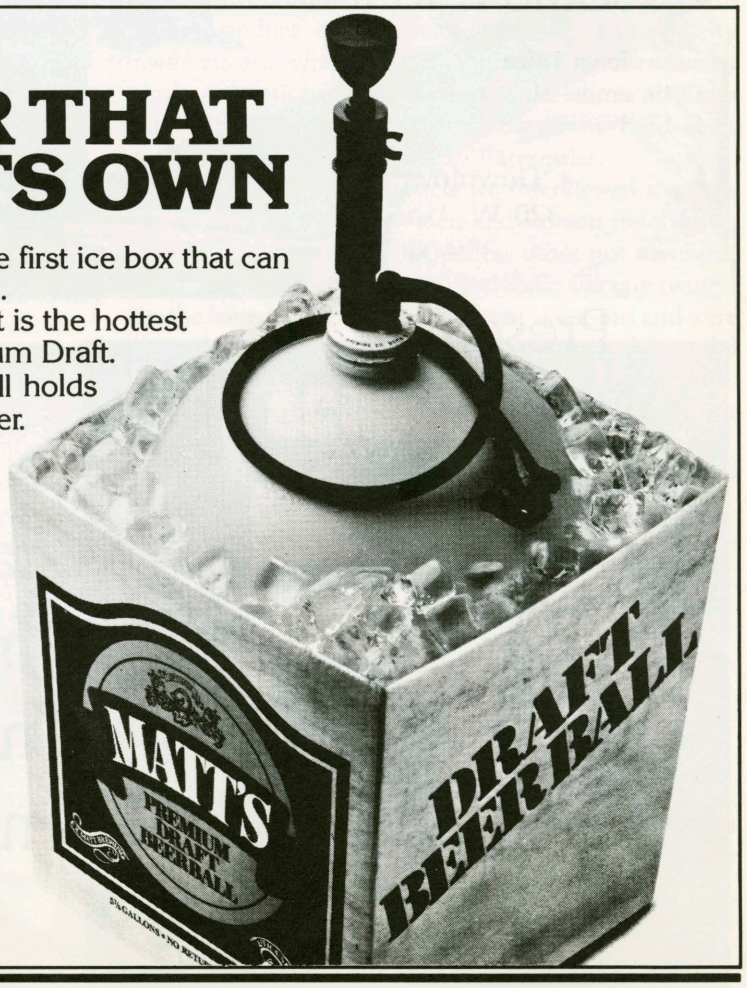

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Fraternity and sorority members obviously favor the fraternity system, but they do not blindly support that system, nor do they ignore the occasional blunders made by fraternities and their members.

THE ISSUE OF FRATERNITIES

KILBURN

Nationwide frats seem to be thriving, but many question the benefits of their continued existence at Hamilton.

by Joe Hinge & Bruce Rowe

Despite a nationwide resurgence of fraternities and sororities, Hamilton College still seems to be wrestling with certain issues involving the frat system on the Hill. To those of us who have been at Hamilton for a while these issues are quite familiar. Some at Hamilton believe that fraternities and sororities discriminate on the basis of sex. Some feel that fraternities are racially discriminatory, pointing to the fact that there are very few minorities in fraternities. Others believe that fraternities divide the campus into small, elitist, self-regulating groups, that fraternities place too much emphasis on alcohol and partying, that fraternities are women-hunting clubs, or that fraternities contribute directly to occurrences of violence, destruction and anti-social conduct on campus. Fraternity and sorority members and sympathizers are put on the defensive by those accusations and believe that the above attitudes and beliefs are projected onto fraternities and their members by those opposed to fraternities.

In preparing for this article we interviewed students on all sides of the issue—men and women involved in fraternities or sororities, as well as those not involved, both pro- and anti-fraternity, and some who are neutral on the issue. All were asked five basic questions and were invited to elaborate and explain their views. Many did not wish to be identified. The five questions were:

1. Do you believe that fraternities have a role at Hamilton? If so, what role is that? If not, why not?
2. Are fraternities good for the community? If so, how so? If not, why not?
3. Do you feel that the student body in general is pro- or anti-fraternity, or are they neutral?
4. Do you feel that the administration is pro- or anti-fraternity, or are they neutral?
5. What do you see as the future of fraternities at Hamilton?

Above: Psi U has been closed since last year. Will it house students this spring? At right, a meeting of the Inter-Fraternity Council.

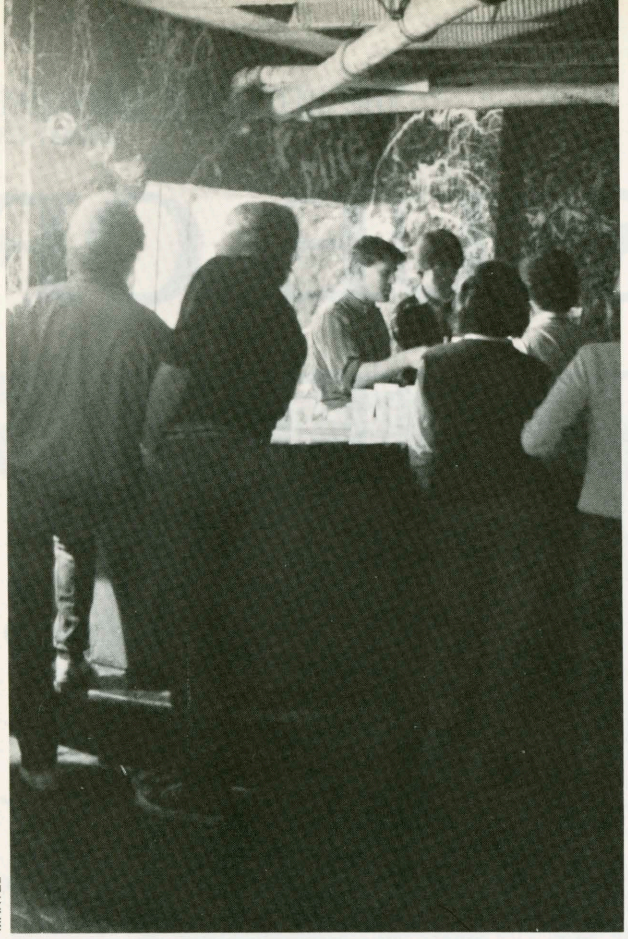
LUCAS

Opposite page: A closed DKE House may belong to KDO in the spring. Below, going to an AD frat party.

Fraternities and Sororities: The View From Within

To say that fraternity and sorority members support the fraternity system seems somewhat axiomatic. But it

Joe Hinge has written frequently for The Spectator, and worked as a features editor last fall. Bruce Rowe also writes often, and has contributed opinions on occasion.



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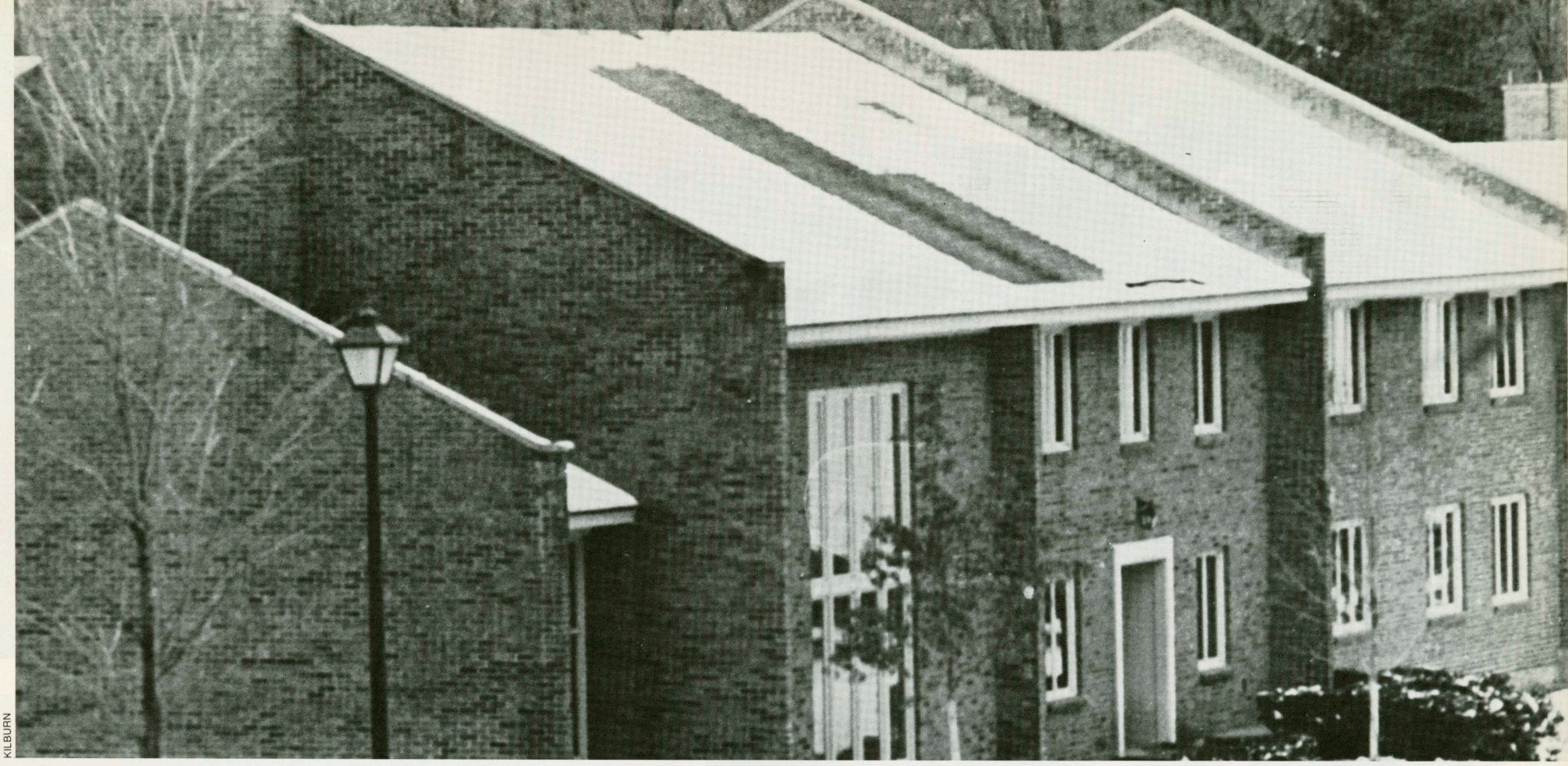
Clockwise from top left: The basement of Sigma Phi at a Houseparty; the Sig House; the Chi Psi House; on the stairs at Chi Psi.

Opposite, top: The Delta Phi House; below, on the dance floor at D Phi.

does not immediately follow that fraternity and sorority members blindly support the Greek system, nor do they act as apologists for or ignore the occasional blunders made by fraternities and their members. Fraternity and sorority members view the role of Greek houses at Hamilton in as many ways as there are fraternity and sorority members. Most point to these organizations as alternative living arrangements for their members, emphasizing that fraternities offer members a chance to live with their friends and others with whom they enjoy associating. One fraternity member emphasized that "historically fraternities have played a very important role in housing" and that since the merger of Hamilton and Kirkland Colleges in 1978 and the increasing size of the college each year this is still an important function. Fraternity members emphasize the College policy of the separation of the College and the fraternities, and stress that the most important "role" of fraternities lies in the opportunities for the individual members, and not for the community as a whole. Fraternities and sororities, in this view, offer an education outside the classroom, companionship, friends, a support system—and they teach responsibility. The members have to run a house, cook meals, scrub floors, etc. Fraternities and sororities *vis a vis* the College community as a whole offer social activities, parties, and contribute directly and indirectly to various charities and cultural activities. The list of these donations is lengthy: various fraternities and Hamilton's only sorority, KDO, have sponsored events to help the ABC House, UNICEF, the Clinton Children's Center, and a voter registration drive. According to Inter-Fraternity Council president Mike Bromley the IFC "does more on the whole than any other organization (on campus) as far as donations are concerned." Bromley makes it clear that these are private voluntary donations from the fraternity's own funds—money which comes from fraternity members—and that the time donated to charitable fund drives and community projects is also voluntary and valuable.

One of the many criticisms levelled against fraternities is that their parties almost always involve alcohol. Fraternity and sorority members view this criticism in several ways. First, they see the emphasis at these parties as being on socializing, not drinking. Second, they point out that virtually all Program Board and IDC functions involve alcohol, as do the parties and events held by other student-run organizations at the College.

As to the charges of sexual discrimination and sexism, fraternity and sorority members realize that their institutions discriminate on the basis of sex as far as entrance requirements; but they don't believe that the atmosphere or structure of their organizations necessarily produces sexist views among the individuals in fraternities or sororities. Bromley defines this as "benign discrimination." According to Bromley, "Hypersensitivity to feminist issues can be both good and bad." It is good because it helps to point to aspects of society that work against women; but it is bad when it infringes on the right of men and women to live separately, and it is bad when men are accused of sexism because they choose to live in an organization composed solely of men. As a KDO member pointed out, "There are irresponsible and



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Those who dislike fraternities and sororities tend to believe that they discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religious belief, and sexual preference, and that they judge people on who they are, not on what they could contribute to a group.

DONNELLY

sexist people in every group." These students also emphasize the fact that the College encourages alternative life styles, including special interest housing and single-sex floors and suites in dormitories. Greek members see a strain of hypocrisy running through the arguments for alternative living arrangements if the administration lays down the set of possibilities and disallows fraternities and sororities.

Fraternity and sorority members of course have opinions on how they are viewed by other students and by the administration. Most feel that the student body generally supports fraternities and sororities and that a "very vocal minority" is anti-fraternity. One fraternity member feels that students are generally neutral on fraternities but react on a situational basis: that is, when fraternities and sororities become an issue, or when a fraternity is accused of being in the wrong, then students react to the situation. This student believes that new administrators come to Hamilton with preconceived notions of fraternity and sorority issues—that "new administrators seem anti-fraternity." He feels that too many faculty and administrators see fraternities only in the light of the probation of DKE and Psi-U, and not as alternative living arrangements.

The future of fraternities and sororities in the eyes of their members rests primarily on the ability of fraternities to police themselves and continue to be a "positive force" in the community. One fraternity member feels that "the frat system will continue but that it will have to exist on a different level than in the past." Others point to alumni donations and their opinions, the stand of the trustees, and the policies of the administration. Bromley feels strongly that fraternities will fight to stay on campus and that people have the right to live with whomever they wish. He again stressed the current policy of the administration—that fraternities are separate entities from the College.

Other Students on Fraternities and Sororities

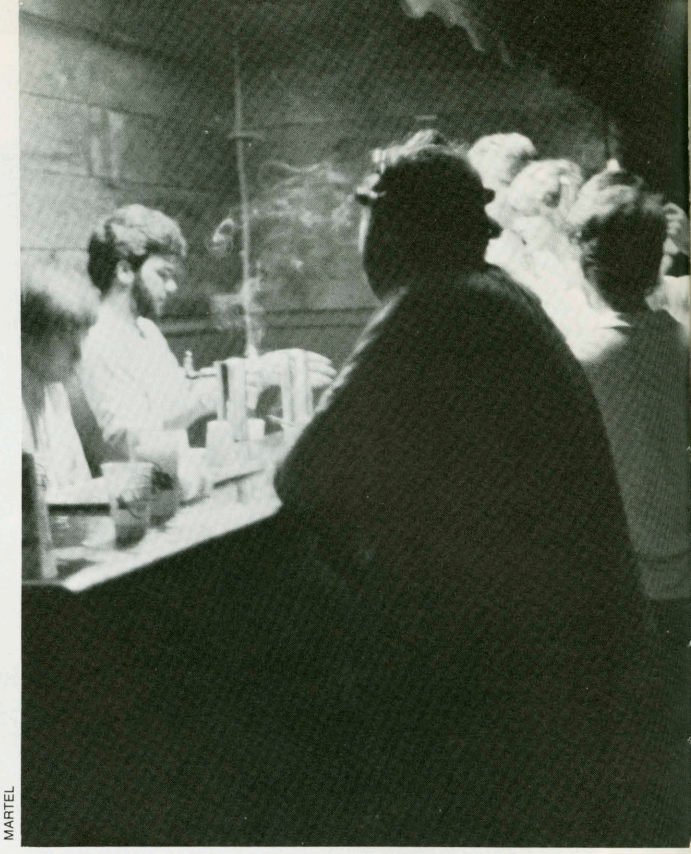
It would not be accurate to say that non-fraternity/sorority members are anti-fraternity/sorority. However, since the views of students who are pro-fraternity/sorority are very similar to the views of fraternity and sorority members, we will concentrate on the views of those most usually vocally anti-fraternity: minority groups and feminists.

Susan Goldstein '85, speaking for herself, feels that fraternities are "elitist, sexist and somewhat racist," and that they are strong here at Hamilton largely because of the social role they play. Another woman, who wishes to remain anonymous, feels that all the benefits fraternity members receive are not pluses but "strikes against them" because these benefits are not open to everyone. One Hispanic student commented that the fraternity role is "a very hollow social role"—a role that in the words of one independent male student is "antiquated and inappropriate." On the other hand, BLSU Chairman Kevin Hayden, speaking on his own behalf, feels that fraternities and sororities are good for the community as separate "cultures" in which members can identify with their friends. He also feels that fraternities and sororities offer students the opportuntiy to learn how to deal with groups of people, a skill that will be needed outside of the college community. Another minority student feels that fraternities and sororities are "elite American institutions" with nothing to offer to the minority student.

Those who dislike fraternities and sororities tend to believe that they discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religious belief, and sexual preference, and that they judge people on who they are, rather than on what they could contribute to a group. KDO is not seen as a viable option for women, but as another sexist organization holding elitist beliefs.

Despite these protests, all of the students interviewed feel that the general consensus among Hamilton students is pro-fraternity and sorority. Because there is so little social life outside fraternities, one student said, "people pocket their beliefs about the bad sides of fraternities" and attend the parties to socialize. All of them feel that the administration as a whole is neither pro- nor anti-fraternity, but that some administrators hold their own personal beliefs about fraternities and sororities. In the words of one student, the administration is "not pro-fraternity, but not actively anti-fraternity." Those who oppose fraternities dislike institutions that separate men from women and perpetuate and institutionalize sexist and racist beliefs—but they do not claim that all fraternity members are guilty of sexist or racist beliefs. It is the institution that they find offensive, "antiquated and inappropriate." These students believe that the future of fraternities lies in the hands of the administration and the College Trustees. Some add that the recent trend towards conservatism among American college students

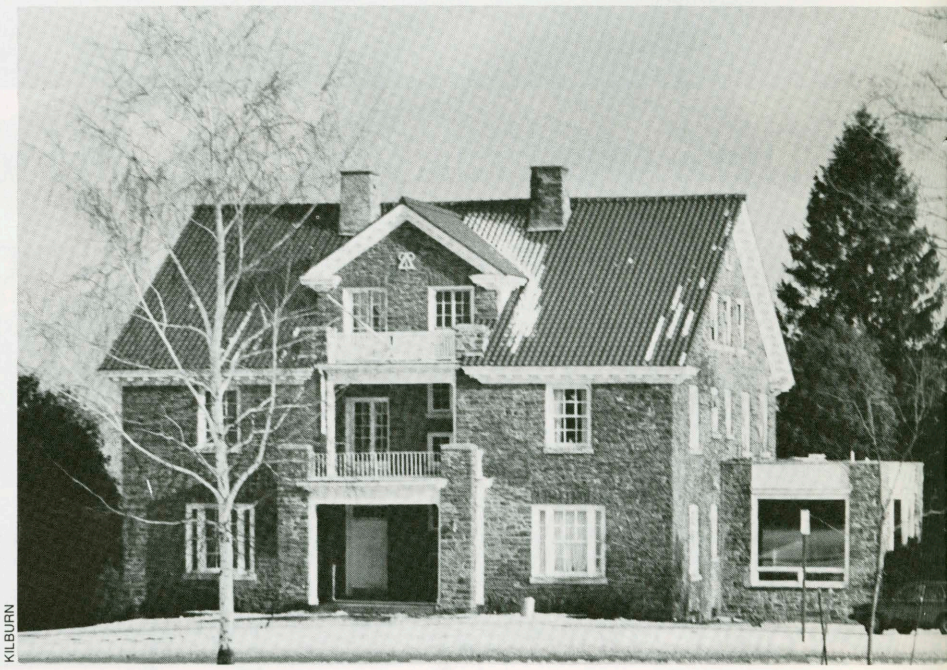
BOLLES



MARTEL

MARTEL

Clockwise from top left: Alpha Delta Phi; the basement bar at AD; Delta Upsilon; party goers at an unidentified frat party. Do frats put too much emphasis on alcohol?



KILBURN

will help to perpetuate fraternities and sororities. Some feel that if "they (fraternities) could become coeducational and completely non-discriminatory, actively seeking to appeal to minorities, than they would no longer be bad for the community." The possibilities for these "alternative living arrangements," if open to everybody, would be much more attractive.

An Administrative View

In the view of the administration, fraternities and sororities will continue to exist in the foreseeable future. Extensive studies were done between 1979 and 1981 on student life and what role fraternities should play on this campus. Based on these studies, the administration formed the policy currently in use. Basically, the policy states that fraternities are a student option, completely acceptable to the College as independent organizations, provided that they are responsibly managed. The organizations will be allowed to continue as long as they responsibly manage their financial affairs, attend to their structural needs, and monitor the behavior of their members.

According to President J. Martin Carovano, though some individual fraternities have caused some concern, fraternities and sororities will most likely be around for some time. He sees the benefits the organizations provide for their members, and, to a certain extent in the recent past, for the social life of the campus.

Although the current policy towards frats does not present a threat to their continued existence, there has clearly been an attempt to deemphasize the role of fraternities on the campus. The College has been working to improve

BOLLES

MARTEL

At right; Theta Delta Chi. Above, crowds push to get to kegs at DU.

the quality of life in residence halls and other College facilities. Towards this end, the College has funnelled money into projects that will create larger social spaces in the residence halls, and has also encouraged autonomy within the dorms. The administration is trying to make sure that students who are not members of fraternities have sufficient options for socializing available to them.

The administration has been working closely with the Interfraternity Alumni Council to insure that the fraternities are safe and continue to be safe. The main problem being addressed is that of maintenance. Together they are looking into potential structural hazards in an attempt to repair any trouble spots before they get out of hand. In addition, the IFAC has worked to put all of the houses under one insurance carrier to provide much more coverage with no change in premiums. As a result of the new policy, four safety inspections are required each year.

Dean of Students Jane Jervis cites the condition of the houses as one of three main concerns which have to be discussed when dealing with fraternities, as it has bearing on the continued financial strength and health of the fraternities. The Dean of Students' office has instituted regular inspections, along with the study of the long-term soundness of the structures. Jervis cites the behavior of the members as also important to the future of the organizations. When the behavior of a house becomes sufficiently misanthropic, the house will be closed. Ground rules for reinstatement of closed houses were established recently when two fraternities, DKE and Psi U, were shut down.

The question also remains as to whether or not fraternities have a place at a coeducational institution like Hamilton. According to Jervis, the organizations cause inequities on campus such as in housing and meal plans. Jervis states that work to remove the inequities has begun, but items like the lottery system still must be fine tuned. In the past, fraternity members have enjoyed a distinct advantage on meal plans and on the off-campus housing lottery. Now, all students are given equal preference, and with the larger number of students this year, there are fewer problems. In general, Jervis says that she "would prefer not to see the proliferation of more restrictive organizations on campus."

The views of the faculty on the future of fraternities vary. Dwight Lindley, Hamilton Tompkins Professor of English and a former Hamilton student, feels that fraternities were necessary when he was a student. The majority of the students were fraternity members, and the social life revolved around the organizations. He feels that today the fraternities are "irrelevant," but predicts that the financially strong ones will remain in the foreseeable future.

Nancy Rabinowitz, Associate Professor of Comparative Literature, opposes the continued existence of fraternities at Hamilton, feeling that that existence prevents Hamilton from being a coeducational institution. She sees the organizations reinforcing a "negative" role for women, one that is perpetuated when people leave Hamilton. Economics Professor Sidney Wertimer feels that fraternities will survive only if they go out and really try to do something constructive. When he first came to the College in 1952, fraternities provided 100 percent of the social life. However, as the college grew, more and more of the functions fraternities had became functions of the college. Wertimer sees fraternities disappearing one by one.

If anything is to be extrapolated from this article, it should be that the debate surrounding Hamilton's Greek houses exists among several sets of conflicting premises. On the one hand, fraternities and sororities can be said to provide viable housing and dining alternatives for students wishing to join them. Yet a segment of Hamilton's student population feels they are suffering institutionalized discrimination by not being permitted to join any organization they so desire. Fraternities and sororities may provide a valuable extracurricular learning experience for their members, but they may also foster elitist views which may continue to exist after graduation, thereby negating that positive learning experience. They provide an invaluable service to the community through their charity and through their contributions to the social life of Hamilton, yet they also detract from the College experience when their behavior becomes anti-intellectual or otherwise hurtful to the community. Finally, they are considered to be independent and discrete organizations, separated from the College, even though they are subject to many of the same regulations governing other organizations not similarly distanced from the College. It is this seeming ambiguity in College policy that may prove to be the most irreconcilable of all contradictions as Hamilton tries to come to terms with the issues of fraternities and sororities on the Hill. ■

JOURNEY TO A TROUBLED LAND

The Kiswahili words 'Hakuna Kazi' and 'Ngonlong'—unemployment and disaster—are heard frequently throughout Kenya.

by Cameron McWhirter

Approximately three months ago, in the middle of August, I was in Winnetka, Illinois. I remember one night slouching in my room (as usual) with my brother. We were watching (as usual) *The Twilight Zone*. The room was strewn with empty Coke bottles, records, dirty clothes, and ragged paperbacks. I remember distinctly as Rod Sterling closed the show my brother sat up and cleared his throat. In the intercommercial silence, he said with a great apathy and a subtle patriotism, "Ya ain't gonna get *this* in Kenya."

And he was right.

Malindi, November 19

As I write this article I am sitting in a wicker chair under a cliche swaying palm and staring at the horizon of the Indian Ocean. I am in Malindi, an old Swahili town on the Kenyan coast roughly 110 kilometers north of Mombasa. I've been vacationing on the beachfront campsite for three days with another St. Lawrence Kenya Program student (or, as we call ourselves, SLEWs). Malindi is in the heart of the tropical coast: sunbeaches, dhows from India and Somalia, fat Indian merchants, Muslim women covered by *biubius*, and pale European tourists. I swim, lie on the beach, drink Cokes, and sit in my wicker chair. The only definition I can come up with is Hedonistic autism. All the Cokes I need (at two Kenyan shillings a bottle—equivalent to 16 cents), shallow warm water, and ugly tourists to laugh at: my Nirvana. Yet even here one still sees examples of underlying strains which lie just below the surface of Kenyan society: racialism and unemployment.

For example, the beachfront shop is run by an Indian merchant. The Indians and Arabs *are* the merchant class of Kenya. "They are all arrogant in their expensive cars. No one likes them very much," a Kikuyu woman once told me. This Indian drives a Peugeot. He has an excessive dislike for local Africans and tourists. This morning I asked about some Indian pastries on the counter.

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"What?" (He doesn't speak Kiswahili with tourists.)

"What is this called?"

(pause) "A cookie."

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"It's four shillings."

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"They're a lot of people out of work."

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Cameron McWhirter has written frequently for The Spectator. The photographs in this article are his.

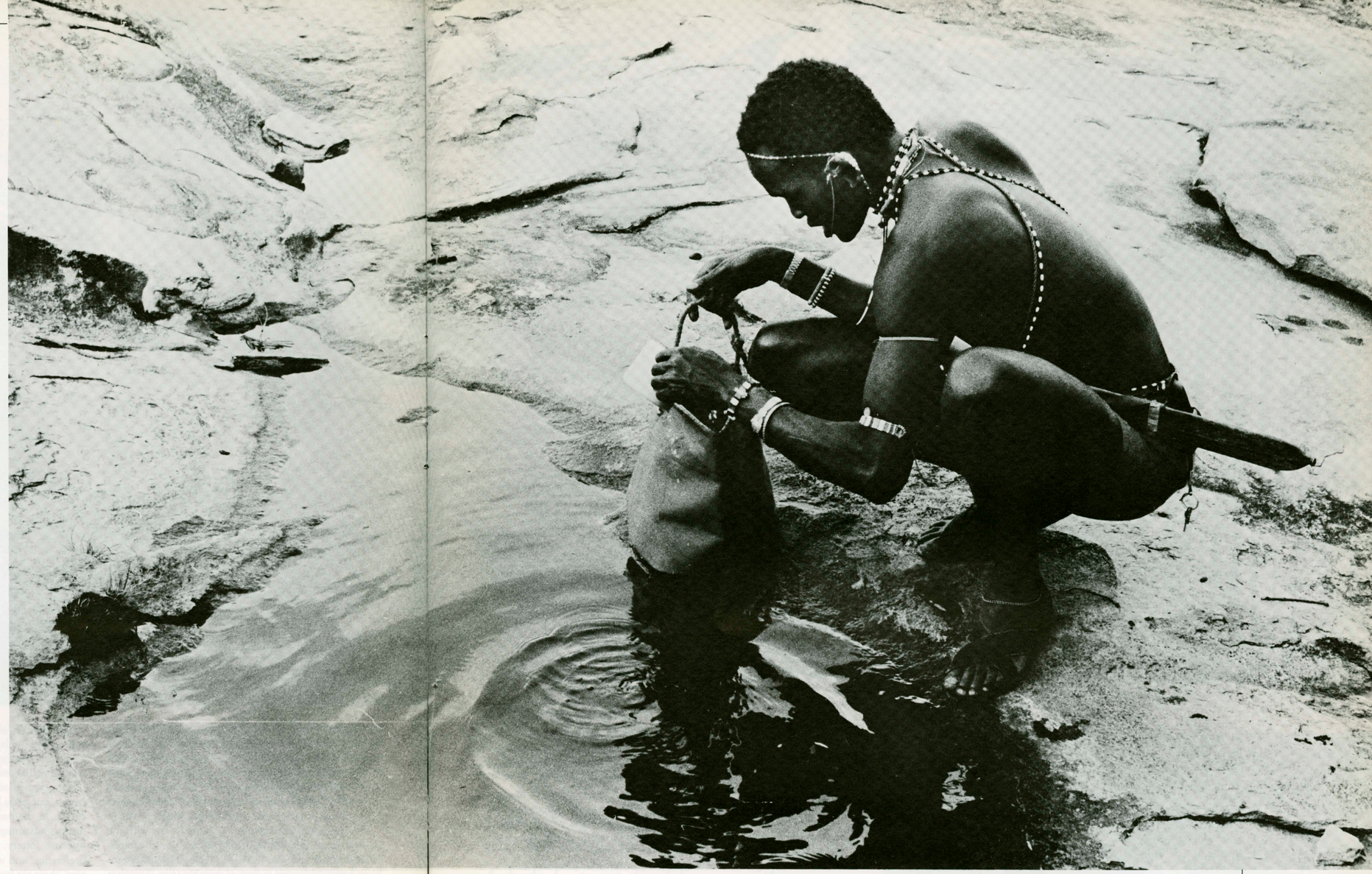
I've been here for over two and a half months on the St. Lawrence Kenya Semester program. Kenya is the melting pot of Islam, neo-colonialism, tribalism, and Christianity. It is a nation of great potential wealth and indescribable natural beauty.

Kenya is situated in East Africa and is roughly the size of Ohio. It is bordered by Ethiopia and Sudan to the north, Uganda to the west, Tanzania to the south, and Somalia and the Indian Ocean to the east. It has an extremely diverse topography: northern arid deserts, the Rift valley system, Mount Kenya, the Aberdere forests, the humid plush coasts, the Serengeti plain, and the swamps near Lake Victoria.

The people are even more diverse than the geography. This nation of 17 million people has over 36 major language groupings and an annual population growth of 4 percent, the largest in the world. The Kikuyu are Kenya's largest tribal group (3.2 million), followed by the Abaluyia (2.1 million) and Luo (1.9 million). Other major tribal groups include the Wakumba, Kisii, Masaii, Somali and Turkana. Due to the British colonial occupation (1895-1963), Kenya also has a large population of Europeans (mainly administrators and plantation owners) and Indians (the merchant class). There has also been a significant Arab immigration for centuries from Iran and Oman, with the main result being the spread of Islam.

Kenya's economic planning since 1963 has been a textbook example of a corporate capitalist model. It is chiefly an agricultural country with chief exports coming from the old colonial tea and coffee plantations in the "White Highlands." Tourism is Kenya's second largest industry and you see the tourists everywhere wearing tacky "jambo" safari outfits (usually matching) and spending hard foreign currency. Multinational corporations such as GM, Suzuki, Coca-Cola, and Barclay's own most of the industry. Europeans and elite Africans (including President Moi) own the large plantations. Indians and Arabs operate the retail shops almost exclusively.

You can get anything you want in Kenya and you can be assured of its shoddy quality: batteries, clothes, shoes, pens, etc. Only handicrafts and beer (Tusker and Whitecap) are superior products. An old roommate of mine used to say, "The economy is doing fine if the beer doesn't cost too much." In Kenya the beer is under government price control—eight Kenyan shillings a premium (about 55 cents). However the economy is by no means "doing fine." The foreign debt is steadily increasing, oil prices are still absurd,



A Kenyan tribesman who has stopped to replenish his water supply sports a pair of keys and a Seiko watchband.

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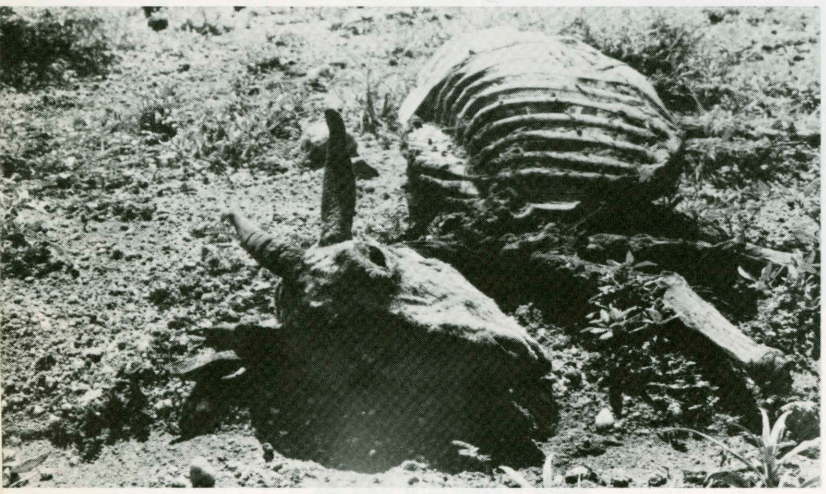


Top: the village women blame the government for the current drought. At lower right, a goat has fallen victim to 'Ngonlong'.

Opposite: hundreds of bead necklaces adorn these Kikuyu boys. Overleaf: herding goats on the Serengeti.

and corruption is rampant in industry and government development projects. The drought has severely affected agricultural output. Unemployment estimates are roughly 30 percent. Everyday in Nairobi you meet tall sullen men begging next to crippled polio victims:

"Tafadhali. Hakuna Kazi. Sina pesa cabisa." ("Please. There is no work. I have no money at all.")

Hakuna Kazi. In the rural western province every family I met introduced me to a young man who didn't seem to do anything during the day.

"Are you out of school?"

"Yes," they would say and look at the ground. Many become alchoholics on the local brew or *pombe*. Others go to cities like Nairobi, Mombasa, or Kisumu, to beg or steal. Many more join gangs and become Albert's "bastards."

On top of all this is the government, the Republic of Kenya. The Kenyan political machine is only comparable to that of the former Mayor Richard Daly in Chicago. Members of Parliament and local officials are all members of the one legal party, KANU. Corruption is rampant and like Chicago, the chief executive runs unchallenged. Politics revolves around the President, "his Excellency Daniel T. Arap Moi." Every speech made in the country praises Moi. His picture, gray and singularly unattractive, is in every bookshop, every *duka*, every church, and every restaurant. Songs praising the President ("The Lion of Kenya") are taught in every school and sung as minute commercials on Kenya's one television station, which is state-owned. His speeches are broadcast complete on both VOK (Voice of Kenya) television and the two radio stations (also state-owned). The news always begins with the same sentence, "His Excellency President Daniel T. Arap Moi said today. . . . " The textbook definition of the Republic of Kenya is a one-party democracy with a strong central executive. However, to understand Kenyan politics properly one must also look below the surface at tribalism and racialism. As proven by the 1982 Air Force coup attempt, Moi's hold is not so firm. He

survived that coup because of intermilitary politics and a handful of loyal army units. Moi is Kaleujan, which is a small tribal grouping near Nakuru. He is not a Kikuyu, the dominant tribal group. Under Kenyatta, the Kikuyu elite ran Kenya. Development projects were focused on Kikuyu areas and Kikuyu held most major government positions. With Kenyatta's death, Vice-President Moi became President and suddenly the Kikuyu were out of power. To Abaluyla and Luo and the other small tribal groups, Moi is a savior after the repressive years of Kikuyu domination. As one Abaluyla put it, "Moi is a good man, he doesn't let the Kikuyu get away with a thing." However, the Kikuyu, and their "cousins" the Embu and Meru, claim Moi is a puppet of the Luo. "He is form two—he is an idiot," they like to mutter, pointing out his seventh-grade education. The old Kikuyu women in the markets blame the drought on Moi. "God does not like Moi, so he does not bring rain." Tribal prejudices are an unavoidable element of Kenyan society.

"If you drop a shilling, nine times out of ten a Kikuyu will pick it up," says a Luo woman.

"The Luo are a strange people who do not speak properly and are quite lazy,"counters a Kikuyu man.

The Samburu hate the Somali, the Muslims hate the Christians. Everyone dislikes the Indians. Seething beneath the surface, this racial divisions and the worsening economy threaten to erase the superficial "republic" of President Moi. As a Kisii bus driver told me in a Nairobi housing project, "If things get worse, Moi will go. He will go."

Kenyatta Conference Center, Nairobi

As I write this I am sitting in the press gallery of room 4 of the Kenyatta Conference Center. Another *NATION* reporter and I are waiting for the Vice-President Mwai Kibaki (a Kikuyu) to open the Canada-Kenya forum on trade. He arrives—cameras flash, expensive suits, security guards. He begins his speech in a dull monotone: "The challenge of Kenya business. . ."

This is my internship—a reporter for the *NATION*, Kenya's largest daily. This work-study internship is the last section of the St. Lawrence Kenya Semester Program. During these last four weeks thirty students are strewn all over Kenya working on water projects, animal observation, medical clinics, banking, etc. The St. Lawrence Program, headed by Director Paul Robinson and his assistant Dave Schafler, is divided into four sections: a rural homestay, an urban homestay and classes, the Samburu field course, and internships.

Our rural homestays began three days after we landed at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport. We stayed among the Abaluyia in western Province. I was located in Enanga village, a small community of approximately 200 people south of Kagamega near the Yala river. My "father" was Aggrey Limeru, a young teacher with eight children, including newborn twins. No electricity, no running water, and two chickens under my bed every night. The children were fascinated by my flashlight, my camera, my chocolate, and my skin. They felt my arms to see if I would rub off on them and soon I was their pet *mazungu* (i.e., European. "Behave," the Kenyan mothers tell their children, "or the *mazungus* will eat you").

Aggrey took me to his school—the Mulwanda Primary school: 4 faded stone buildings with rusting tin roofs and 900 students. Western Province has the largest birthrate in a country which has the largest birthrate in the world. 900 students enrolled and more come everyday to the school with only 10 teachers.

I sit with the headmaster as a toothless scrawny old man whines in Kiluyian to get his ninth child enrolled without school fees. The headmaster reprimands the frightened old man, a polygamist, but then he enrolls the child.

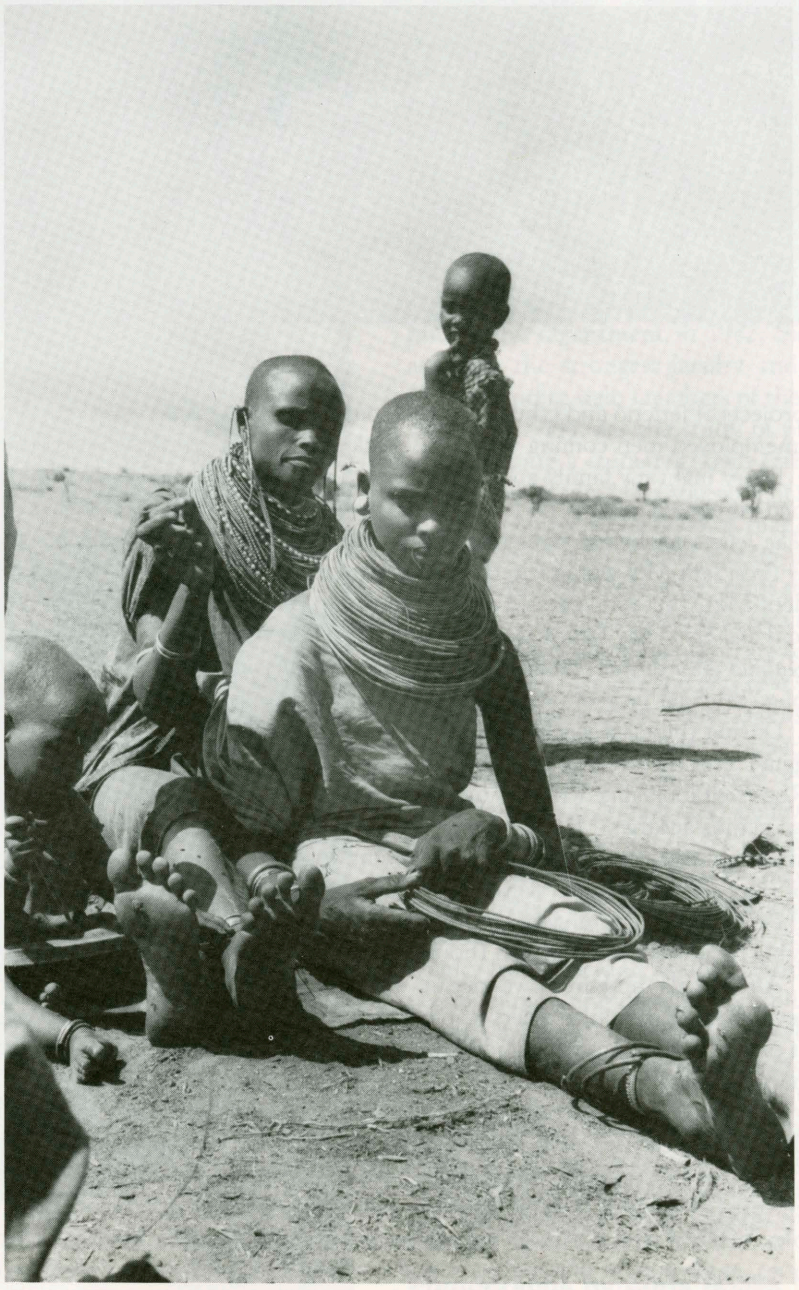
"Moi has said that all children must go to school. I see a dozen men like this one every week. He came from Mombasa, *Hakuna Kazi*. With no work, he cannot pay his fees—so all I can do is yell and then take them in. What can I do?"

I sit in the back of a civics class (form 5). The children crowd onto old wooden benches—60 to a classroom. They peek back to stare at the *mazungu* who sits in the special wicker chair. Many of the children have never seen a white.

I get up in front of the class to explain American politics. I write on the battered chalkboard: "REAGAN IS A REPUBLICAN, MONDALE IS A DEMOCRAT," and go on from there—needless to say, not very in the depth. I conclude and take questions: "What is the climate in your place?" "What do you grow?" "Do you hate chickens?" Later I ask Aggrey if they understood me. He laughs, "The children said, 'It is hard to understand the *mazungu*—he speaks through his nose.' " Thanks. Thanks a lot.

I spent my urban homestay with a Meru family in an East Nairobi housing project, BURU BURU PHASE II. The family was quite different from my rural homestay. My father, Joseph Kiambi, had visited America and had studied in the Soviet Union on a scholarship. He spoke five languages. My mother worked as a nurse in Jericho, one of Nairobi's worst slum housing projects. They only had four children, including a boy of 6 and a girl of 10. The older two boys were away at school and came home only on school holidays. They wore tight T-shirts and cheap jeans. "Do you know of Donna Summer?" "TDK, these tapes are hard to get here."

I commuted to classes everyday on the Kenya bus no. 36, which was usually 40 people over capacity. The bus route went through the poor housing



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projects of Jericho and Uhuru—women pushing and fighting to get on, young unemployed men coming up on the back entrance to try and ride for free.

Every night my family and I would watch the big color television my father had purchased in New York. We would watch the news ("His Excellency. . ."), *The Jeffersons*, British wrestling, *Dallas*, UN documentaries, etc. Occasionally President Moi would interrupt programming with a speech. "I hate President Moi," my ten-year-old sister announced one day. "He interrrupts *Sanford and Son*." My family was very intelligent; my father used to explain *Das Kapital* after dinner. However, this family was bitten by the bug, the western bug: Michael Jackson, television, jeans, and junk food.

During these six weeks we also made a weekend trip to the Masai Mara game reserve. The trip was organized by Michael Rainy, an eccentric Teddy Roosevelt look-alike who can only be inadequately described as a tempermental genius-at-large. Michael Rainy has spent the last 15 years in East Africa studying everything from lion and hyena to the complex survival strategy of the Samburu people. Masai Mara is an indescribable primordial plain on the edge of great Serengeti. From lorries we observed lions and hyenas devour zebra, and marvelled at the thousands upon thousands of wildebeest.

After finals in Nairobi we met up with Michael Rainy, his wife Judy, and several Samburu junior elders who help him operate the Samburu field course. It is a two week course of hiking, climbing, and camping among the Samburu people.

The Samburu are closely related to the Masai and are also pasturalists, herding mainly cattle. Due to the inflexible environment of north central Kenya, they have also found it necessary to herd goats, sheep, and camel. Samburu culture has evolved over (at least) the last 3,000 years into an extremely complex survival strategy involving age-set hierarchies, complex herding techniques, environment manipulation and maintenance, and the key element of communal mobility. I certainly did not come close to incorporating all of Samburu society in a two-week field course, and no newspaper article could properly summarize Samburu society.

As the pictures show, Samburu is *not* Winnetka, Illinois. What the pictures may not show is that Samburu district has been in the throes of a severe drought for over a year (the same drought that has hit Ethiopia). We visited Samburu just as the November short rains were finally arriving. Cattle carcasses were still strewn all over the countryside. Areas which had once been covered in waist high grass were still barren dust. In the lowlands average livestock losses are estimated at 80 percent. In the highlands the figure is roughly 50 percent. And the cattle are still dying: the grass has not yet grown back.

Less than two weeks ago, I was herding goats with another student and my Samburu father. I had spent the two previous days living in an 8 by 10 dung hut. I slept on a tick-ridden sheepskin bed with six other people. I ate one bowl of tasteless cornmash twice a day only to kill a dull ache in my stomach. Every morning we would herd into the lower hills near Nairobi Keju to cut leaves for the livestock. I remember distinctly on one occasion watching another herdsman's cow simply sit down on the hillside and die of exhaustion. The herdsman walked over and took out his *panga*. As he began to skin the animal, blood trickled down his arms. My father turned to me and muttered *"Ngorlong"*—the Luan word meaning drought, the disaster. In a moment, I understood what he had said—and, more importantly, what he had meant.

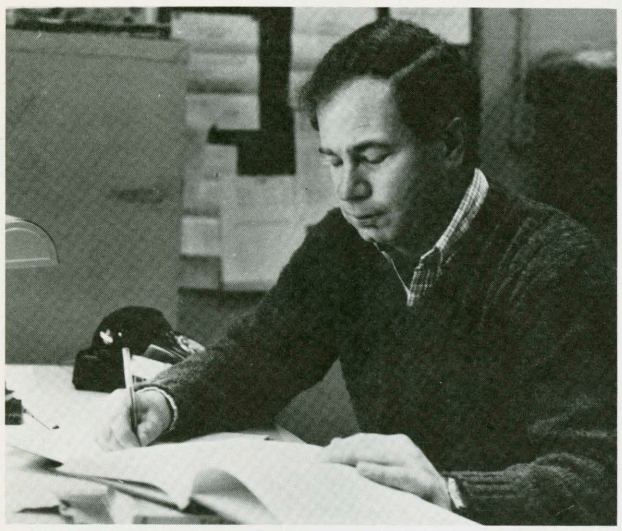
The Florida Steak and Chip House—Nairobi

An uncle of mine sells gaskets to different automobile servicing outlets in the western Chicago suburbs. "Won the salesmanship award '78, '79, '80!" he likes to announce. I met him last summer at a family reunion. After a firm handshake and some Cheez Whiz, he said with great volume and a great lack of sincerity, "What's this I hear about you going to Africa? What the hell you wanna go to Africa for?" (I must admit, I've asked myself that question.)

As I write this it is Friday, the muslim holy day of *Ijuman*. I am sitting at the counter of a greasy "meat and chips" *duka* with a Coke in my hand. Out of the window I can see the Muslims line up in the mosque. The tower speakers are calling the holy to afternoon prayer ("*Allahu Akbar*"). The polio victims and other beggars are crowded outside the entrance. *"What the hell you wanna go to Africa for?"* It seems impossible to synthesize, impossible to properly transmit Africa. This St. Lawrence Kenya Semester Program is neither a semester nor a program. It is something quite different altogether. In the past two and a half months I've met with Abaluyia farmers, Samburu warriors, Swahili taxi drivers, Indian merchants, and Kikuyu bus drivers. I've observed Hindu services, Muslim prayer services, and Christian Sunday worship. I've climbed extinct volcanoes and hiked through tropical forests. I've seen hyena, wildebeest, elephant, lion and jackal. Any description of Kenya of Africa is inadequate. Any attempt by me to convey Africa will inevitably fall short. *"What the hell you wanna go to Africa for?"*

I suppose I came to Africa to find something different, totally different from what I have known. And I have. ■

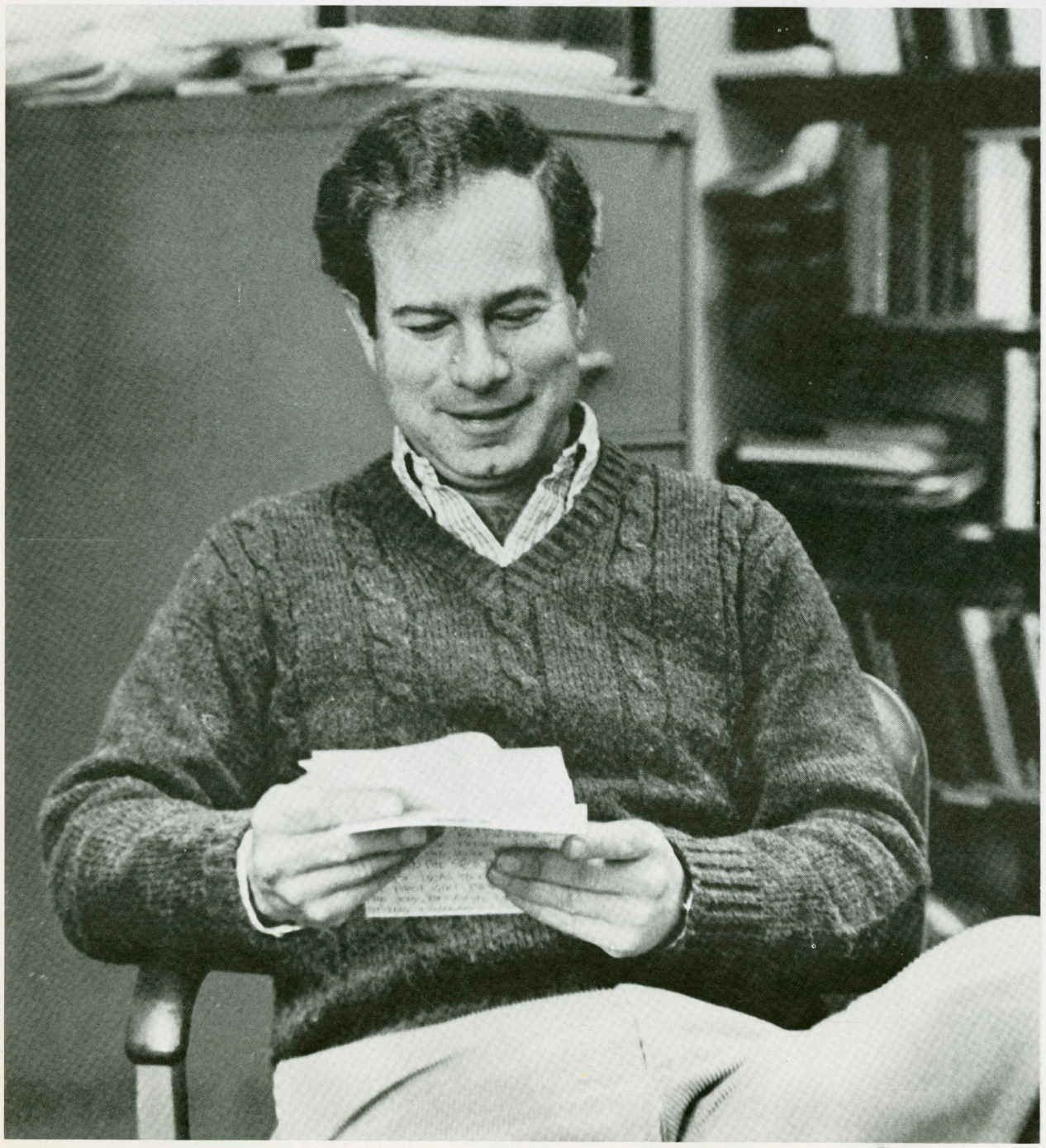
Nenda Salama
November 24, 1984



AN ABECEDARIAN FOR ALL SEASONS

The votes are in, the ballots tabulated, and a "surprised and gratified" Professor Robert L. Simon is this year's Abecedarian of the Year. Unfortunately, we cannot offer Professor Simon a trip to the Caribbean as his prize—no professional modeling job, no screen test in Hollywood either. And we're sure he doesn't need a lifetime subscription to The Spectator. In lieu of financial reward, we will attempt herein to acknowledge his achievements as a professor and a scholar, and present a portrait of a "truly fun guy," in the words of one voter.

Simon was born in Brooklyn on May 12, 1941. He received his B.A. degree from Lafayette College in 1963, and earned his Ph.D six years later at the University of Pennsylvania. He came to Hamilton soon thereafter, and his 15-year stay has been marked by distinguished academic achievement that has brought him national recognition. Currently serving as William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of Philosophy (he is chair of that department), Simon has accumulated numerous awards and honors throughout his career, including a Rockefeller Foundation Humanities Fellowship, a Mellon Fellowship at the Aspen Institute, and a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for independent research (all in addition to being our Abecedarian). His areas of specialization include political and social philosophy, ethical theory, philosophy and public affairs, and philosophy of law.



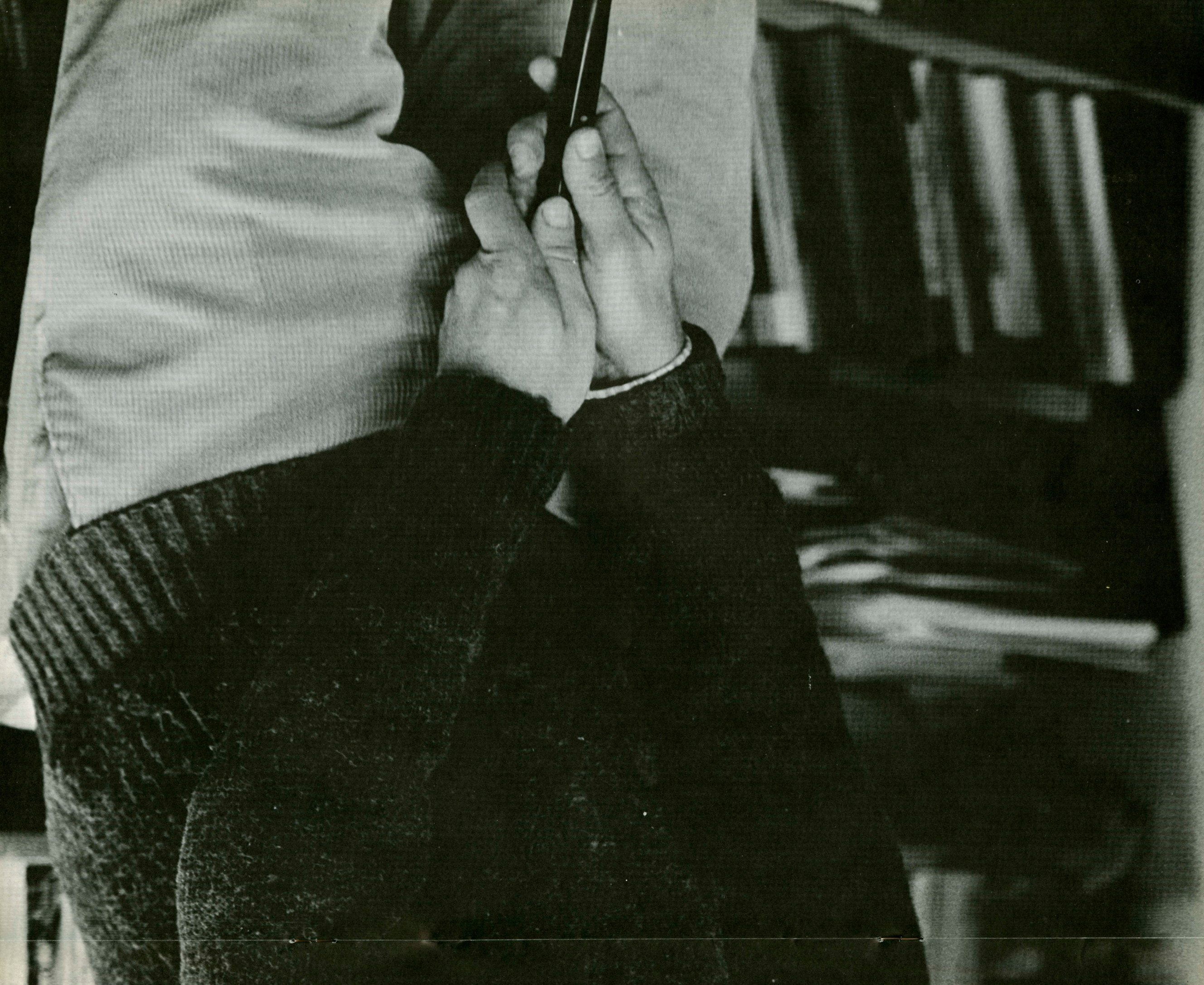
Simon is the author of more than a dozen articles since 1970 and has written two books. His most recent opus, entitled *Sports and Social Values*, deals with sexual equality, violence, and competition in sports and was published last year. An avid sports fan (his newest book is dedicated to his parents, "who perhaps now will finally believe that the many hours I spent playing ball instead of doing homework were really 'field research' after all"), Simon is a well-known fixture at Hamilton basketball games.

But his love for sports is not limited to watching them. Simon spent his last wedding anniversary taking part in the Utica City amateur, a golf tournament for people 25 and over. With his wife and children looking on, Simon had only to finish 56th of 65 to make the first-round cut, and—well, it just wasn't his day. His dismal showing prompted his 11-year-old son to sum up his father's performance on the day by asking his mother, "How can Daddy be so bad?" In all fairness, Simon has shot a par 72 at Colgate's "difficult" Seven Oaks.

Simon's gentle demeanor and wit make him both easily accessible and a pleasure to talk to. Made chair of the philosophy department in 1982, Simon is striving "to assemble the strongest faculty and the strongest curriculum and to help members of the department in any way I can." He sees the study of philosophy as a way of developing a student's "own critical ability" and "a respect for reason." His appraisal of the College is frank and fair. Above all he believes that Hamilton is a "very good school" with a good faculty and a good student body. In fact he thinks that "most students here are fun to teach." But Simon sees two prevailing problems. He finds that students at Hamilton are somewhat "internally focused." For instance, he says that "philosophy should be like playing a sport," with discussions that are "not only enjoyable but valuable." But because of the students' concern with "what comes next" it is often difficult to elicit discussion. Simon also believes that the faculty "could achieve more if under less pressure." He points to the large number of faculty involvements and committees, "the very heavy teaching load" and the emphasis on research and publishing that combine to keep the faculty from reaching its full potential. He does not advocate eliminating these responsibilities altogether, but he does favor reducing them somewhat. Under such circumstances Simon feels that the faculty could meet its potential.

Congratulations, Professor Simon. It's not the Nobel Prize, but it's all we can do to salute your commitment to scholarship, teaching, and, most importantly, improving the quality of life at Hamilton for all of us. ■

Photographs by Chris Bolles



REMEMBERING JENNI

Eight months ago in June the world learned of Jenni Rubin's death in the village of Defale in Togo, West Africa. Jenni had a vision of the world, of the kind of change she wanted and the world needed, and she actively pursued it. The death of a person like Jenni is especially tragic for she was truly an exceptional human being—one who always gave of herself. Her life stands as a testament to what is good in this world, to values that desperately need resurrection, and to prejudices we must leave behind.

It is truly a rare person who can see what needs to be done in this world and can work with compassion and sincerity toward that end. The following is a memorial to Jenni, in the hope that her message will not be soon forgotten.

by Jan-Mary Lindenthal

Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature, and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails. Let us rise early and fast, or break fast, gently and without perturbation; let company come and company go, let the bells ring and the children shout—determined to make a day of it. Why should we knock under and go with the stream? Let us not be upset and overwhelmed in that terrible rapid whirlpool called a dinner, situated in the meridian shadows. Weather this danger, and you are safe, for the rest of the journey is down hill. With unrelaxed nerves, with morning vigor, sail by it, looking another way. If the engine whistles, let it whistle till it is hoarse for its pains. If the bell rings, why should we run? Let us settle ourselves, and work and wedge our feet downward, through the mud and slush of opinion, and prejudice, and tradition, and delusion, and appearance, that allusion which covers the globe . . . till we come to a hard bottom and rocks in place, which we can call reality, and say, This is, and no mistake.

—Henry David Thoreau

I do not know if the words I place on paper today, here, now, on this day, will have any lasting worth, but what the words are about—the person they are about will last—is lasting. Jennifer Lynn Rubin died on June 11, in Togo, West Africa during her term as a Peace Corps volunteer in the village of Defale. I do not want to write of how Jenni died, her loss is plain enough. I think it more important to write of how she lived. Her drive to never "let things glide" but always challenge made her a vital person whose contributions to human beings were wrought from conviction and high ideal.

"The New York Times article of July 4 which reported the tragedy of Jenni's death ran under the headline, "An Idealist's Short Life Ends in a Slaying in Distant Togo." I assume that in calling Jenni "an idealist" the newspaper meant a person who believes in lofty values and purposes in a transcendental dignity of the human soul. That seems an apt description, as I remember Jenni. A more strictly technical sense of idealism is the belief that there is no external world, that everything consists of ideas and that the senses are not to be trusted. The philosophical idealists to whom this description applies usually view human knowledge more as a making than as a finding. In this more technical sense, the Jenni I knew was no idealist, for she was a person who looked straight at things and people, and faced up to them as realists do. This sort of realism characterized her work here at Hamilton and apparently her work in Togo as well. She cared when she was here, and she cared when she was there, and what she cared about were real people with real needs; she cared about real threats to human dignity, and she sought to act upon her concerns."

—Jeffrey Eaton, Hamilton College Chaplain

I would like to chronicle here the works that Jenny did as a student, a feminist and a human being. It truly is rare today to find a person so young who holds such deep convictions about life and the sanctity and joy it can hold. But it is not just that she held certain things sacred, it is that she had the strength to work to preserve their sanctity, and to live her own life in accordance with her beliefs. It is easy to protest things; we as students have protested everything from the Marines, to the Gay Alliance, to the CIA, to Phyllis Schlafly, to Women, to doors in Carnegie, to the very notion of protesting. As I read through words that Jenni herself has written I sense something very different there. As a feminist, it is easy to be angry, hard to redirect that anger toward one's own empowerment. Jenni was angry about things; she saw the injustice in the system; yet she saw the way to make anger something that was not hurtful or destructive. She used her anger to envision change.

In the spring of her senior year, Jenni was sexually harrassed in the Hamilton College Chapel. She wrote an Op-Ed for The Spectator the following week.

On Saturday night the Hamilton College Folk Festival sponsored a concert in the Chapel. Many people were dancing, clapping, and smiling; for a while the atmosphere was one of pleasure and community. That atmosphere was destroyed when several students took it upon themselves to be part of the performance. . . .I was greatly disturbed, and resentful that this student had succeeded in destroying what had been a rare and euphoric atmosphere. I approached him and said, calmly, "What

Jan-Mary Lindenthal is co-editor of The ABC's of Reading, Hamilton College's non-fiction magazine.

COURTESY NANCY RABINOWITZ

gives you the idea that everyone here wants to look at you? Not everyone here wants to look at you."

The man proceeded to scream obscenities at Jenni and make vulgar gestures in her direction. Jenni transformed what was a humiliating and degrading experience for her into a lesson of empowerment. I hold her words so vital that I wish to repeat them here.

I think it fair to say that in this culture, and specifically in this "community," many men much of the time conceptualize and express anger or frustration in sexual terms. Sex or rape for them is achievement (or triumph), and its suggestion may in some sense ameliorate those feelings of anger and frustration—regardless of whether sexuality has anything to do with their real cause. Whether literal or metaphorical, such conceptualization and expression in sexual terms necessarily require a sexual object: woman.

On Saturday night that woman was me. But throughout our lives, all women experience sexual objectification in ways which consistently and systematically degrade and humiliate us just as I was degraded and humiliated then. That student's treatment of me was not an isolated event; it reflects the nature of the "community" and the society we live in. This does not mean that his behavior is legitimized because it reflects the nature of society. On the contrary: it only reflects and fosters that nature—a "nature which is not natural," legitimizes nothing but drastic and immediate change.

What makes Jenni's response to such an incident so rare is that she was able to transform her anger into a message to which, as a feminist, she was vehemently committed. As a human being, she called for societal change that would correct such abuses of not only women, but all people. Her vision was not just for women; she had the insight to speak of liberation for women in terms of liberation for all. She also cared enough about her convictions that she sought to see change in her immediate surroundings as well. She also envisioned a better Hamilton.

Jenni was one of the least complacent and least cynical students I have known at Hamilton. To be sure, she was often skeptical, and among the things about which she was skeptical was Hamilton itself. But her skepticism never turned sour. She refused to play the system for whatever it was worth or to retire in despair of the system. Instead she opted to try and change things: to fight the system according to which women are subordinated to men; to oppose the forces in human society which would make the rich richer at the expense of the poor; to resist violence in the conduct of human relations. She was someone who lived in such a way as to make this a world where love is more possible. There are too few people like her.

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"I know that Jenni would be uncomfortable to think she was being referred to as someone who was saint-like. . . . And yet, if it is true that sanctity is marked by a passion for the real, if the saint is the person who would rather be bruised by the world than not feel it all, the person who would risk embracing life rather than keeping it at a distance, then the term fits her, whatever her reservations about the traditional usage."

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. . .I am doubtless putting my professors in an uncomfortable position. . . I regret that this is so, but also recognize that this is an extension of the "system," which becomes increasingly ugly when we see how it works and when we begin to reject that. And I am not willing to apologize for the "System."

Jenni's work in Togo was further testament to her conviction to change. Mr. Piatt, Peace Corps director in Togo, said in an interview with the New York Times that Jenni had a "tremendous impact" on the village. She developed a project for her village that would reduce the workload of the women, who spent two days a week gathering fire wood. Jenni taught them how to make more efficient stoves out of local materials so that they could use the wood more efficiently and cut their workload in half. "Miss Rubin told the villagers that for each stove she built for them, they would have to build two stoves for others in the village and in neighboring villages."

This is no small achievement. To live in a culture so vastly different from one's own, to attempt to understand their problems to the best of your ability, and to make things happen is a task that one must never underestimate. As it is obvious from her success, Jenni was able to communicate with the people in her village and work with them to build the stoves. To us, a stove is something we take for granted, something we see and use everyday, at a whim. But to go to a village and offer them something they have never had or something they never knew how to use is to offer them a great gift. For many people in Third World countries, the bulk of the day is spent working. If someone can help them reduce that work, by showing them how they can do it better, yet remain true to their heritage, they are giving the village time for other pursuits that we take for granted: learning, playing, celebrating. Jenny gave the people in her village just such a gift, and she did it with no motivation other than love.

"By the time they had killed her," Jenni's father said in an interview with the New York Times, "she had come to terms with that sense of dislocation and was writing that despite the problems, she was exactly where she should be and she knew it."

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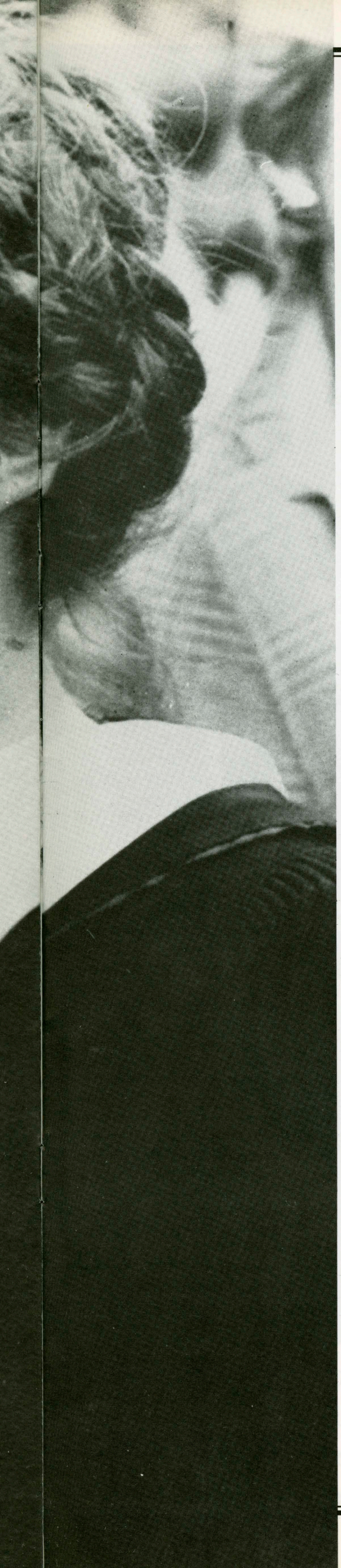

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From left, the Smithsonian Institution tower, the Capitol Building, the Washington Monument, and the Lincoln Memorial. The Iwo Jima Memorial is in the foreground.

POWER in the Capital

Spending a term in Washington, says the author, adds considerably to one's knowledge of the inner workings of our legislative system, but not without an occasional shock to one's preconceived notions of the political process. Making such an excursion to the home of our nation's power brokers also alters one's perceptions of what life is like in the years A.H. (after Hamilton).

by Andrew O. McKee

"You know, I can't wait to get out into the **real** world. Get a job. Make some money. Face the real challenges of life. How 'bout you?"

"I can handle the wait."

"Wait a minute. I thought you were goin' schizo to graduate. What's the deal?"

"I like it here. It's nice—and easy. Anyway, here the beer's cheap, you can stay in bed all day if you want. And best of all the dishes are done by somebody else. Take my advice. Kick back and have a good time. I know I'm going to."

"Why are you so afraid of the real world, anyway?"

"Oh, I'm not afraid. I'm just in no rush to, um, dive in."

"Say, where were you last semester? I didn't see you around."

"Washington."

"How was it?"

"It was great!"

"I bet. But you still want to stay in school?"

"Yup. For as long as I can."

"You're crazy."

"I know."

Staring at the United States Capitol with the wind cracking through the nearby flag, one can't help but get a feeling that something is missing from the dozens of government books that line the library shelves. Sure, there's plenty of stuff written about the process of government, the scope and methods of political science and the abstract margins of supply and demand. Still, there is something elusive not quite captured by the social scientists when they write about the intricate world of government. It's the essence of something which circulates through the marble halls and the great monuments that's missing: the veritable blood force which somehow ties everything together. What is this elusive commodity? I call it POWER. Or better yet, the *quest* for it.

It's a good way to explain why things work as they do in the nation's capital; not how the political science models fit into the real world, but how things *really* work: what's important to whom and for what reasons. As Hamilton students in the Term in Washington program, we are all exposed to the Legislative and Executive branch through consecutive six week, full-time internships. Once the program begins with the congressional internships in either the House or the Senate, the learning process begins immediately, for better or worse. This is where we put to the test all that we've studied, hypothesized, prophesized, with the purpose of trying to figure out what applies and what doesn't. I suppose you could

Andrew O. McKee, recently returned from Washington, is a former news editor at The Spectator.

'Sure, there's plenty of stuff written about the process of government, the scope and methods of political science and abstract margins of supply and demand. Still, there is something elusive, not quite captured by the social scientists when they write about the intricate world of government.'

From left, the Smithsonian Institution tower, the Capitol Building, the Washington Monument, and the Lincoln Memorial. The Iwo Jima Memorial is in the foreground.

POWER in the Capital

Spending a term in Washington, says the author, adds considerably to one's knowledge of the inner workings of our legislative system, but not without an occasional shock to one's preconceived notions of the political process. Making such an excursion to the home of our nation's power brokers also alters one's perceptions of what life is like in the years A.H. (after Hamilton).

by Andrew O. McKee

"You know, I can't wait to get out into the **real** world. Get a job. Make some money. Face the real challenges of life. How 'bout you?"

"I can handle the wait."

"Wait a minute. I thought you were goin' schizo to graduate. What's the deal?"

"I like it here. It's nice—and easy. Anyway, here the beer's cheap, you can stay in bed all day if you want. And best of all the dishes are done by somebody else. Take my advice. Kick back and have a good time. I know I'm going to."

"Why are you so afraid of the real world, anyway?"

"Oh, I'm not afraid. I'm just in no rush to, um, dive in."

"Say, where were you last semester? I didn't see you around."

"Washington."

"How was it?"

"It was great!"

"I bet. But you still want to stay in school?"

"Yup. For as long as I can."

"You're crazy."

"I know."

Staring at the United States Capitol with the wind cracking through the nearby flag, one can't help but get a feeling that something is missing from the dozens of government books that line the library shelves. Sure, there's plenty of stuff written about the process of government, the scope and methods of political science and the abstract margins of supply and demand. Still, there is something elusive not quite captured by the social scientists when they write about the intricate world of government. It's the essence of something which circulates through the marble halls and the great monuments that's missing: the veritable blood force which somehow ties everything together. What is this elusive commodity? I call it POWER. Or better yet, the *quest* for it.

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Above: the author interned in the congressional offices of this man, Senator Chris Dodd (D-Connecticut).

Opposite page: President Reagan gives a press conference.

look at it like spending seven of your eight semesters at Hamilton in class and the remaining one in lab. But here, the chemistry is people and the various mixtures can produce some very interesting results.

The tantalyzing lure of power, that feeling of being able to have an effect on the process, is something that truly motivates people, whether they may be out for personal or institutional glory. But there's a big difference between personal and institutional goals. The notion of the "institutional prerogative of self perpetuation"—that is, the idea that an institution functions for its own good—is a topic of voluminous scholarship. But the interrelationship between *individual* actors within the system (exclusive of the political appointees and elected officials—essentially the invisible policy makers behind the scenes) and what motivates them as *individuals* (and not merely parts of institutions) in Washington, a city where power flows like beer at the Pub on quarters night, is a topic that hasn't been talked about very much.

The Congressional Staff

The power "struggle" becomes pretty obvious, even in the first few days of work on the Hill. During the first few meetings of the Hamilton group where we would sit around and discuss the internships in the IPO (Intern Participant Observation, one of the classes for which we are graded), much of the discussion focused on the delegation of authority and the respective influence that the congressional staff had on the important decisions of the day. The actual degree of influence is difficult to assess, but the power incentive is a good way to think about some of the potential reasons why laws are made, and for whose benefit.

"As Henry Kissinger put it 'power is the ultimate aphrodisiac'," observed John Vecchione '86, Hamilton intern at large. "It's not the power of Senators and Congressmen that is so interesting—for their power is real, and credible through the electoral process—but that of the invisible actors behind the scenes that I and most of the seventeen Hamilton interns find so intriguing." Because of the incredible mass of information that a Senator is responsible for, it is not uncommon for a staffer to prepare the all encompassing

Briefing Book—Subject:The World's Problems Solved, H.J. Res 1. In the *Book*, the staffer lays out the facts, A,B and C; and the options, 1,2 and 3.The opinion of the staffer is usually nestled neatly after the tab labeled "Recommendations." There will, I imagine, be a pause, possibly a meditative moment of cognizance. The likelihood that the opinion of the staffer will be followed, and the subsequent vote in that direction, is purely speculative. But I imagine that the probability is pretty high, and that those few moments with the staffer have the imminent potential to alter a vote, and ultimately the law. That's power.

An example might help galvanize the point. The legislative agenda occasionally calls for a Conference Committee, where members of the respective House and Senate committees debate and negotiate the details of the final bill. A few weeks into my Senate stint, I had a chance to sit in on an actual conference. I was thrilled at the prospect at seeing some heavy-duty legislative battling (something even full-time staffers often never see).

At the Conference, my schoolbook illusions were immediately shattered. After a while, as the hour grew long, the two chairmen decided that they were getting hungry and wanted to bag further discussion of the bill. But there were several funding amendments that needed clarification, some which involved billions of dollars in funds of which neither side could come to agree upon. I assumed that the Senators and Representatives of the committees would break for dinner and continue negotiating until disputes were settled. Wrong. Instead of continuing the fight, they decided to leave the "little details" of multi-billion dollar dealings up to the discretion of the staffs. I couldn't believe my ears! To think that the details of vital social legislation were to be left up to the staff seemed to me to be intuitively wrong. After all, it is the member of Congress who should be most in tune with the details of the work of a committee on which he or she sits. Besides, who knows what the interests are of the staffers who make the final decisions? What are their proclivities? Whose payroll are they really on?

At the Conference, before a Congressman would answer a question or assert an opinion, there would always be someone draped over his of her shoulder like an ominous whispering black cloud. Who were these guys, anyway? What were they saying? What if I went up to my Senator and whispered in his ear, I wondered. Would he do what I told him to, too? Before this disillusioning occasion, I had envisioned members of Congress as veritable experts, harsh pencil-pushing legislators who cared about even the most trifling details. Instead, the staffers are left to their own devices. Welcome to the real world.

The Press

Congressional staffers sure aren't the only ones with muscles to flex. "Sometimes these reporters would call on the telephone and demand to speak to the Senator because 'they've got a front page story' that needs a quote from Moynihan," said Mark Schwendler '86 regarding the pull of the press. "They actually believe they can just get on the phone with a United States Senator anytime they want!" Despite their often obnoxious obtrusiveness, the press are very important to the members of Congress, far more than I ever imagined. After all, public accountability and a clean image—often conveyed exclusively through the media—is the maxim of success for an elected official. In Congress, the press is viewed as an integral part of a politician's political viability—someone you might invite to lunch, but never "home to dinner," where the whole story, including all the dirty laundry, becomes crystal clear. "Spoon feed 'em the little things, and they won't go for the jugular when they're really hungry" are words to live by as a congressional press secretary.

The Bureaucracy

" 'Bureaucracy' connotes all the bad things that we think of government" said Captain Tom Miller, a naval officer currently on assignment at the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs at the State Department. Despite much of the common perception of "Big Government" embodied in the notion of the bureaucracy, Captain Miller sees real value in the way a bureaucracy functions. Even though the quest for personal power is present, it rarely manifests itself in policy. Miller explains: "There are a lot of natural tensions at work when there are many actors involved in the policy process. It's good that there are tensions between the guys at NSC (National Security Council), those at DOD (Department of Defense) and us at State so that one actor doesn't dominate the discussion. There's always a check, no matter what kind of ego trip someone might be on. If one guy had his way, it'd be fine if he were always right. . .but it would be hell to pay if he were wrong."

However, the virtues of the bureaucracy can also result in people (and policy) who get lost in its largesse. A few of the Hamilton students were at the Justice Department for their Executive internships. John Vecchione notes that the bureaucrats do their standard functions and fulfill their assigned responsibilities exceptionally well. But, "as soon as something comes in that is unexpected, there is a fury of confusion. Nobody knows what to do! The bureaucracy doesn't deal well with the unknown." In essence, they become the victims of what the political scientists call SOP's, or standard operating procedures.

Courtney Soling '86, also at the Justice Department, worked in the Office of Communications. "Some people write in with the saddest stories and we can do nothing but refer them to another agency. People here want to help, but they are stifled— caught in the routine of the office." The bureaucrats, in accordance with SOP "do what they're told to do perfectly. They don't stray from the norm. They're just like robots." Despite their desire to do more, power within the bureaucratic mechanism is spread incredibly thin so as to insure that no one power-hungry group or individual gets absolute control. What results is a system *extraordinaire* staffed by seriously dedicated people looking to get their piece of the action, but who are prevented from flexing too much muscle by the nature of the system itself.

On a personal level, what do all these observations mean? Probably not a lot, except to the seventeen of us who went through the experience of thirteen weeks of muddling through the power circles of the Capitol. The sense of purpose, of dedication and the *feeling* of friction with interaction is something beyond scholarship. Leaping from the ideal world of abstract models and theories into the REAL WORLD (often lauded in song and story) is like a plunge into a chilly, turbulent sea. Once you learn to stay afloat without panicking, then the next challenge is to *swim*. But the security of an internship is knowing that the warm beach is still there. In our case, it is a chilly one located on top of a foot-hill somewhere in the eastern Adirondacks, and the security it offers is the knowledge that there is still time to worry about the *real* swimming test that comes after graduation. ■

Life Down Under: 'Fair Dinkum!'

A peculiar local phrase paradoxically meaning both 'Yes, definitely!' and 'Are you kidding?' sums up the author's perceptions of Australian life.

by Laurie Semple

I walk almost automatically up Pitt Street toward the Harbor, a part of town that attracts me like a magnet. I struggle through lunch hour throngs, ducking to avoid the charming sales pitches of sidewalk 'florists'. As the familiar cobblestone footpaths of Circular Quay appear in front of me, I smile in breathless awe as I have dozens of times before. I buy an orange from a fruit stand and listen to a synthesizer-pop demonstration while I eat. Afterward, I take a leisurely stroll along the quay, watching the ferries and a luxury cruise ship which has just moored. I stop to gaze at the Opera House, mesmerized as usual by the reflective roof tiles, which change color just as often as the sky. No photo would do the building justice. Gulls rummage for food in the park, while students sleep on their books, hands crossed and faces covered with the Morning Herald. As I turn toward the bus stop, I remember wistfully that I must soon leave the magic of the place behind.

As one of a group of forty American students (including fellow Hamiltonians Bobby Strandberg and John MacAffer) in the Rollins College Program in Sydney, Australia, I was drawn here by my insatiable curiosity, the lure of adventure, and my desire to do something "different." Here I felt as though I had escaped—from parental guidance, administrative influence, peer pressure, and American culture in general. No, kangaroos do not hop down main streets, nor are there koalas in every tree. Once I got over the initial disappointment in discovering such truths and my own naivete, I came closer to understanding the true spirit of this amazing country.

Laurie Semple has worked for The Spectator as a reporter and as a photography editor.

photographs by Laurie Semple

Above: a local resident hangs out. Opposite page: view of the Sydney Opera House and Harbor Bridge from the Botanical Gardens.

Surprising to most people, including myself, is the fact that Australia is almost identical in size to the continental United States. In contrast to the quarter billion Americans, however, there are only fifteen million people living in Australia, and over half live in just two cities: Sydney and Melbourne. Much of the country's interior (the "outback") is desert or semi-desert, and averages about ten square miles per person. Cities are uniquely concentrated around the perimeter of the continent simply for survival and practicality. The Australians' close association with the sea has also meant the extraordinary popularity of water sports. Beaches are crowded day and night in the summer, and night-time surfing contests are not unusual.

The city of Sydney itself has a character all its own. Sydney is the state capital of New South Wales, and is located along the southeast coast of Australia. There are a number of skyscrapers including Sydney Tower, the tallest building in the southern hemisphere. I had dinner there once with a friend, in one of the two revolving restaurants. The view is breathtaking. The abundance of sandstone, glass, and white paint, along with an incredible lack of pollution and the orange rooftops of suburbia, is easily contrasted with the grayness of New York City—even on a good day. Shopping is excellent; "arcades" replace malls and are the most popular shopping spots. Probably the city's most beautiful feature, however, is Sydney Harbor, mentioned in the earlier scenario. Ferries are an essential part of public transport, and many even act as school buses. The Harbor Bridge spans the waterway, and the Opera House, Luna (Amusement) Park, Taronga Zoo, and the Botanical Gardens are all at the water's edge. The Opera House is an incredible architectural feat. The best description I ever heard came from an irate taxpayer who said that it looked like an "orgy of turtles."

Since I opted not to take the Australian history course, I don't know very much about the country's political system. I do know that Australia is part of the Commonwealth of Nations and has a parliamentary government and that the two political parties are Liberal (conservative) and Labor (liberal). Prime Minister Bob Hawke (Labor) was just reelected in a close race against Liberal leader Andrew Peacock.

One of the questions most often asked by Australians when they found out I was American was "Why did you vote for Ronald Reagan?" I explained to them that it wasn't my fault he got elected—I didn't vote for him. After asking about Reagan, the next question is usually "Are the States really as bad as it seems on *Hill Street Blues*?" Yes, I say, even worse in some places, which never fails to evoke gasps of disgust and amazement. *Hill Street* and M*A*S*H are the favorite American shows on Australian television. Other "quality" TV imports include *The 'A' Team* and *T.J. Hooker*.

But Australian television, in spite of imports from the States, differs in many respects from its American cousin. I sat with my mouth agape the first time I turned on the tube. Movies are more or less uncensored, but female nudity is much more "acceptable" for viewing than male nudity. In addition, television advertising is incredibly sexist. Well-endowed women in teeny bikinis prance across the screen promoting everything from beer to cars to building societies. The latest fad seems to be high-energy dance routines that have nothing whatsoever to do with the product being advertised, and since there isn't a great deal of local talent to choose from, the same dancers appear in every commercial.

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Before continuing, I feel obliged to clarify a bit of Australian diction. Some of it stems from British origins, while other fragments are strictly Australian. "Bloody hell" is an all-purpose expression comparable to four-letter expletives in American slang. "Fair dinkum" is my personal favorite. Another all-purpose phrase, this may be used as a question or a statement and means "Is that so?" "That's the honest truth," "Are you kidding?" etc. I have chosen not to speculate about the literal translation of "pull your finger out," but as a colloquial expression it means "stop procrastinating," as in "I'll have to pull my finger out soon and get some work done." Miscellaneous terms include "sheila" (an attractive woman), "yobbo" (a beer-drinking 'redneck'), "ocker" (quintessentially Australian), "loo" (toilet), "jumper" (sweater), and "this arvo" (this afternoon). Such verbiage belongs to the language called "Shrine," a word which is also what it sounds like when a fair dinkum Aussie (pronounced "ozzie") says "Australian."

Despite the initial language barrier ("Are they really speaking *English*?"), it was quite easy to adjust to life Down Under (or "Downunda," as it were). The country is a jumbled mix of both American and British influences, with many unique elements of its own. There are just a few things that take getting used to:

(1) *Driving on the wrong side of the road (i.e. the left)*—Australians love arguing about which side is the correct side, until you point out that most people are right-handed and, therefore, it is more practical to have the stick shift to the right of the wheel. This means that the wheel has to be on the left, and, consequently, you have to drive on the right. This may seem trivial if you don't plan to drive in Australia, as I didn't, but I had just as difficult a time walking along the sidewalk ("footpath"). I bumped into people until I learned to keep left.

(2) *Shouting*—To shout is not "to yell" in Australia, but rather to buy a round of drinks. When out with friends, it is an unwritten law that each person in the group must "shout" at least once. When someone says "Your shout!" it's your turn to buy. Seventeen people, seventeen drinks. The bright side is that sixteen of your drinks are "free."

(3) *Queueing*—Australians don't line up—they queue. Most banks have "central queueing": there are several tellers, but only one waiting line. Traffic signs read "Do not queue across intersection," and the library desk sign says "Queue to the left."

(4) *Chemists*—A fancy generic term for "drug store." As the name implies, however, only "chemical" products are available, such as shampoo, cosmetics, prescription drugs, etc. To buy a pencil, notebook, newspaper, or other paper goods, you have to go to a *newsagent*, which is comparable to a stationery store in the States.

The Rollins Program matched the students with host families in the Sydney suburbs by evaluating housing questionnaires. My "family" consisted of a 29-year-old

A statue of Captain James Cook, discoverer of Australia, at the entrance to the Gardens. Sydney Tower is in the background.

man (Michael), his fiance (Janet), her friend (Rosemary), and a German Shepherd (Devil). The dog slept in a bean bag next to the toilet. Anyway, the living arrangements provided a unique first-hand experience with Australian life and culture. Even urban life is laid back, free from the tension usually present in American cities. There is virtually no such thing as being mugged on a Sydney street, even after dark. Pickpockets and purse snatchers simply aren't a threat, which may account for Australians' astonishment at *Hill Street Blues*. There are high concentrations of Asians, homosexuals, green mohawks, and neon clothes (it was hard not to notice), which perhaps indicate the importance of personal expression to the Australians; however, Asians are tolerated the least.

Australian women generally seem to be fun-loving, generous, health-oriented, and somewhat fashionably trendy. Most Australian men seem to be old-world chauvinists, though, having been socialized in the traditionally romantic sense as protectors of women. Though some men have accepted women as their "equals," the women's movement has yet to gain momentum. Though Australian men may put women on a pedestal, and Australian women may be happy enough to remain there, one must accept this as a socio-cultural difference, instead of attempting to launch a one-women feminist crusade (as I soon learned). It would not be fair to generalize about Australian culture in these terms, but this at least was my own experience.

The apparent cultural uniqueness of Australia to an outsider is certainly enhanced by the strange unfamiliarity of the countryside itself. Class excursions (for art, environment, and flora and fauna courses) provided ample opportunity for me to see much of New South Wales. In all of Australia, there are no mountains, geysers, active volcanoes, glaciers, or otherwise "spectacular" scenery. Plateaus, rolling hills, and ancient volcanic plugs provide the only relief from the extraordinary flatness of the land, but beaches are often bordered by sandstone cliffs. Temperate rainforests occupy several areas in the extreme north, while the red soil of the interior desert supports little life at all. Eucalyptus trees dominate the dryer forests, so much so that a perpetual blue haze from the evaporating eucalyptus oil hovers over a "mountain" range west of Sydney. The animal life is unique and varied, though most people are only familiar with the koala, kangaroo, platypus, and perhaps a few others. Marsupials, or pouched mammals, have won the evolutionary battle for survival and occupy virtually every ecological niche in the country. Some of the bigger kangaroos, for example, lead a lifestyle comparable to that of the deer in North America. The wombat, a burrowing animal, is the pouched replacement for the American groundhog.

Going to Australia made me lose many of my preconceived notions about my culture and myself. I have learned to be virtually independent and to relate to people as if we are all human beings, and not just students. I have met several people whose friendships I will cherish for the rest of my life. I have gained a fresh perspective on familiar issues, learned to budget my time and money (sort of), and become knowledgeable about a culture on the other side of the world. Perhaps most significantly, I have found an appreciation for my own country and culture which I thought I would never have and had previously taken for granted. Fair dinkum. ■

EZRA POUND: POET OR POLITICIAN?

A conference this spring will mark the centenary of the poet's birth. But is it possible to separate Pound's contributions to twentieth century literature from the context of his radical personal politics, which embraced both Mussolini's fascism and Hitler's racism?

by Adam Wergeles

As Hamilton College prepares to send forth over 400 new alumni into the grips of modern society it would be apropos, perhaps, to consider some of the more well-known graduates that precede the class of 1985. Alexander Woollcott, psychologist B.F. Skinner, and recently elected governor of Delaware Michael Castle have all achieved mass recognition for their accomplishments. Some alumni, like Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of War Elihu Root, are recalled with deep pride; some, like Woollcott, are fondly admired; and some, like B.F. Skinner, are controversial.

Yet none is more controversial than Ezra Pound. A member of the class of 1905, Pound has distinguished himself among literary scholars and historians alike as a man of strange and disturbing contradictions. Pound was and remains, on the one hand, one of the most important poets of the twentieth century: his work profoundly influenced such artists as Yeats, T.S. Eliot, and William Carlos Williams. But Pound is also remembered for his radical and distinctly anti-semitic political views, views that keep many people from admiring his considerable artistic achievements. Pound holds a peculiar place in history and poses an equally peculiar problem for historians. As one who carries with him both the brilliance of literary genius and the stigma of anti-semitism, Pound remains, as always, enigmatic.

On the weekend of April 20 and April 21, 1985 Hamilton College will hold a conference recognizing the 100th birthday of its most controversial alumnus. The conference, entitled "Ezra Pound Centenary Conference on Politics, Economics, and Literature," will, according to Professor Ivan Marki of the English department, "bring together students of politics, economics, and literature" and thus provide a "forum to discuss the world in which they live." The primary focus of this conference will be the interrelationships of these fields with particular but not exclusive consideration of Pound's work. Early this semester Professor Marki, who will lead the conference, sent out letters to faculty members of colleges and universities around the country asking for short papers analyzing "the relationship of literature and its study to political and economic matters." He emphasized that "the argument need not focus on Pound."

The weekend will be divided into four discussions (two each day) and two keynote addresses. The keynote speakers, who will conclude the work of each day, will be Professor Elzinga of the Economics department at the University of Virginia and Professor A. Walton Litz of the English department at Princeton University. Omar Pound, Pound's son and a member of the class of '51, will also be on campus to talk about his translations of Persian and Arabic poetry. Marki also hopes that the Theatre and Speech departments, as well as the Emerson Gallery, will provide readings and exhibitions to "support the work of the conference." Another possibility is a production of Pound's opera based on *The Grand Testament of the Villon*, sponsored by the Music Department. In any event the weekend will be both busy and informative.

Ezra Pound was born in Hailey, Idaho on October 30, 1885. A close-knit family life and strong parental ties would prove to have a strong influence on his character. At the age of three his family moved to Philadelphia, where his father worked at the mint. His family was not rich, but their life was comfortable.

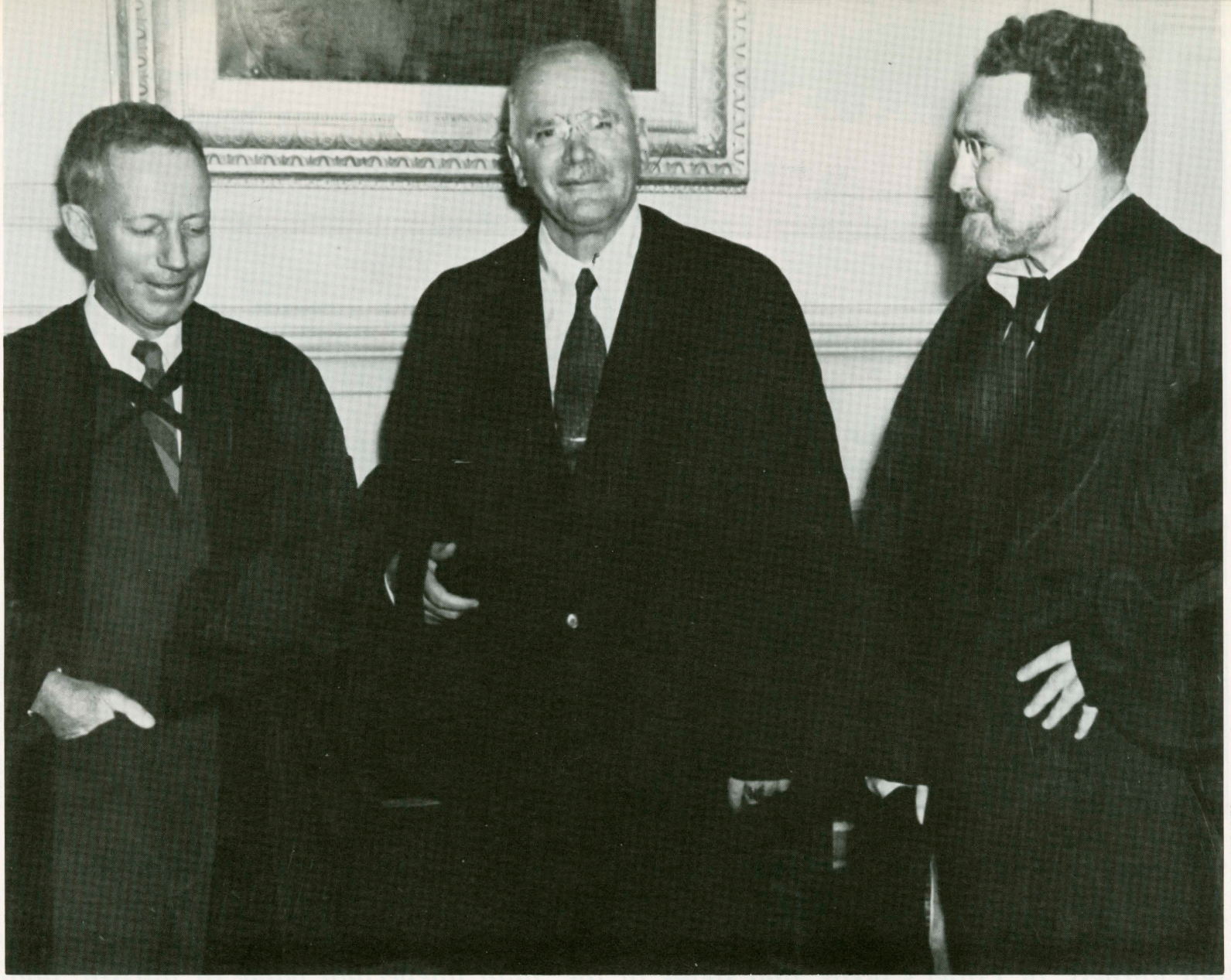
From an early age, Pound possessed a growing concern for economic justice and the even distribution of wealth. He attended various schools up through his early teens, and distinguished himself as a Latin scholar. At the age of 15 he decided to become a poet. Pound believed that his "impulse" to be a poet came from God, but that it was his respon-

Adam Wergeles, currently a copy editor at The Spectator, has written several articles about Hamilton and Clinton history.

HAMILTON COLLEGE ARCHIVES

Previous page: Pound, far left, as a member of the Hamilton Chess Team. Above, somewhere in Paris circa 1910. Opposite page: Pound, far right, with fellow honorary degree recipients Elihu Root, Jr. and H.V. Kaltenborn at Commencement in 1939.

Overleaf: Pound in 1969, here speaking to the late Walter Pilkington during his last visit to Hamilton.



HAMILTON COLLEGE ARCHIVES

Pound supported, both financially and emotionally, such rising literary geniuses as Doolittle, Yeats, Zukofsky, Eliot, Frost, Joyce, and Hemingway—a fact that may prove to be more significant than his poetry.

siblilty to gain and develop the ability. Consequently, Pound decided to enter college—the University of Pennsylvania, where he studied primarily liberal arts.

After two years, Pound left the University for the small school atmosphere of Hamilton College. At Hamilton his studies were, again, strongly one-sided but he seemed to adjust to Hamilton easily. He was a skilled member of the Hamilton chess team, and enjoyed fencing and tennis as well. While at Hamilton he was profoundly affected by Professor William Shepard, who introduced him to Medieval literature. Shepard's influence is clearly visible in the poet's works, which contain many allusions to both Classical and Medieval literature.

It was at Hamilton that Pound began to develop the tools that would earn him his reputation as the "inventor of modern poetry in English." In 1939 Hamilton recognized their well-known alumnus by bestowing upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

Upon graduating from Hamilton in 1905 he returned to the University of Pennsylvania to pursue a master's degree, but did not stay. After leaving the University, Pound searched for a job that would allow him to continue studying his real passion, romance languages, and also allow him time to continue writing. The seemingly perfect opportunity arose when he was offered the chairmanship of the Romance Languages department at Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana. But Pound felt stifled by the provincial atmosphere of his surroundings there and longed to go to Europe. In 1908 he was dismissed from Wabash because it was believed the Pound was "entertaining" a woman in his room; in fact, it is more likely that Pound offered a hungry woman food and a place to sleep.

Justified or not, the dismissal freed Pound for a trip to Europe. He came to London in 1908, where he supported himself by giving a series of lectures at the Royal Polytechnic Institute. Of crucial importance during this period were Pound's introductions to such rising literary figures as Yeats, William Carlos Williams, and many others. Pound firmly influenced and supported, both financially and emotionally, these literary geniuses."The encouragement he provided to such young writers as Hilda Doolittle, Yeats, Zukofsky, Eliot, Frost, Joyce, and Hemingway," says ex-Hamilton Professor of English William Hoffa, "may indeed prove to be more significant than his actual poetry."

In April of 1914 Pound married Dorothy Shakespear. Meanwhile, Pound had been writing profusely, and had published about 40 volumes of poetry and translations; among these were *A Lume Spento*, *Personae* and *Exultations*. As a result Pound began to gain the recognition and fame that he so sorely desired.

In 1924 Pound and his wife settled in Rapallo, a small Italian town. His daughter Mary was born in July of that year—the product of Pound's affair with his mistress, Olga Rudge. Two months later, Pound's wife gave birth to a boy, Omar Shakespear Pound. Pound continued to write poetry—and, to make money, worked as a literary journalist.

The years from 1915 to 1941 were marked by Pound's growing concern with economics and politics. In 1918 Pound met Major C.H. Douglas, who had been expounding the theory of social credit—a reasonable alternative to the economic problem of usury. Charles Norman, in his biography entitled *Ezra Pound*, explains Douglas's view that "'real credit' of a nation resided in its people and their capacity to produce needed goods, but that a perversion had set in, due to the 'cornering' of money, so that 'financial credit' actually controlled 'real credit' to the profit of a few." This single view would lead Pound to conclu-

HAMILTON COLLEGE ARCHIVES

Pound openly expressed his views on fascism and anti-semitism. He wrote of the 'essential fairness' of Hitler's goals, and spoke of the 'high intellectual value of fascism' and the 'wisdom of the Duce'.

sions that would, ultimately, alter his life.

Pound's complete egocentrism compelled him to voice his unorthodox beliefs, and loudly. Strongly believing, as Douglas had said, that the economics of the day served only "the few," Pound became intensely preoccupied with economic reforms and finally embraced fascism as the ultimate solution.

Pound was, however, a pacifist; unable to accept the war state that comes with fascism, he believed instead in the corporate state. While Pound believed that the solution to the apparent crises of the time was the fascist corporate state, he believed that the cause was, to a great extent, the greed of Jewish bankers, such as the Rothschilds. As a result, Pound became virulently anti-semitic. In several articles Pound clearly expressed both his views on anti-semitism and fascism. In 1940 he wrote in the *Japan Times* of the "essential fairness" of Hitler's goals. He continued in an even more radical vein, saying, "Don't start a pogrom. . .that is, not an old-style killing of small Jews. That system is no good whatever. Of course if some man had a stroke of genius, and could start a pogrom up at the top. . .there might be something to say for it."

Pound also appeared on the front page of *Libro e Moschetto*, a fascist journal. According to Noel Stock's book *The Life of Ezra Pound*, Pound spoke in his article of "Mussolini's powerful intuition," the "high intellectual value of Fascism" and the "wisdom of the *Duce*."

In 1941 he began a series of radio broadcasts in Rome, in part because of a dire need for money and because of his desire to share his views with the world. The topics of his broadcasts ranged from the American theatrical stage and poetry to economics and politics. He repeatedly and vociferously attacked both United States' involvement in the war and Roosevelt's policies—attacks so scathing that they ultimately led to his arrest on May 5, 1945. He was held for months at the Disciplinary Training Center at Pisa. Ironically, it was during the latter half of his stay at this center that Pound finished *The Pisan Cantos*, which represented the climax of his literary career. He was later removed to Washington, DC where he was indicted for treason. Found unfit to stand trial by four prominent psychologists, Pound was confined to St. Elizabeth's government hospital for the mentally ill. He remained there until April of 1958.

With the help of poet Robert Frost and others, Pound was eventually released from the hospital. He returned to Italy shortly thereafter. The remainder of his life came to be known as the "silent period"—the result, some people think, of Pound's belief that perhaps he had already said enough. Pound was never to speak up again. He died in Venice in 1972.

The latter half of Pound's life has proven to be troublesome for his admirers—those who value his literary genius but not his political views. The dilemma poses the rather disturbing question of whether or not Pound's work is inextricably tied to his views; and if so, to what extent consideration of Pound's political beliefs should affect literary interpretations of his work. Frank Lorenz, editor of College Publications for Hamilton's Office of Communications and Development, admits that Pound was in many ways a "despicable figure," but adds that he was "selfless in his dedication to helping others." Lorenz further suggests that the"immense role he played in the literary history of this century" cannot be ignored. Professor of Religion Heidi Ravven, head of Hamilton's Jewish Studies program, feels that "we can applaud his poetry and appreciate his greatness without adopting" his values.

Professor Marki adds that Pound's political views were "sheer foolishness," but that he was nevertheless a "splendid artist." Marki also pointed out that Pound, unlike many artists, saw an "obligation to involve himself. . .in public affairs." In this respect, a conference relating economics and politics to literature is particularly appropriate in the context of Pound's works. Pound's life, as Marki points out, was marked by the "massive personal tragedy" occasioned by his twisted political beliefs. Pound's concern with economic justice for all people, his influence on the greatest writers of this century, and his own contributions to our literary history are all invaluable. But the specter of his personal politics may interfere with our appreciation of him as a literary genius. As Marki points out, "It is a profound irony that he will end up with the likes of Nazis and fascists." ■

Of Art and Dinosaurs

Hamilton's "liberal arts" are neither (as the saying goes). It hardly needs pointing out that the things which once could be convincingly labeled as liberal at Hamilton—students, professors, campus activities, academic programs, etc.—have suffered setbacks in number and strength. With the flow of this year's new students has come the tide of national conservative thought, and the ebb of the liberal alternative on the Hill. This should not be news to anyone.

What is perhaps less apparent is the waning of the latter half of this institution's ideological claims—the arts. For some time now, the country's conservative trends have been mirrored (if not amplified) in the institutional steerage at Hamilton; for some time now, those same translated attitudes have been choking the life from the arts here. In their advancing crippled states, music, dance, theatre, and the studio arts stumble along like dinosaurs, cumbersome 'beasts' pathetic in their inability to escape their own extinction.

It takes only a cursory look at the current state of the arts on campus to foresee their inevitable destruction—a destruction marked, as in T.S. Eliot's poetic vision, not by a bang but a whimper. The Studio Art department has all but crumbled under the weight of administrative corruption. Amid complaints that its educational offerings have disintegrated, in some cases into the poorest presentation of rudimentary mechanics, the department exists as a loose confederation of repellent forces sometimes searching for a common direction. Majors, and often non-majors, have expressed feelings of alienation and betrayal as they are forced to trudge along in an environment where the processes of communication and education are severely hindered, if not stifled. For example, the Emerson Gallery, originally intended as a teaching facility, has been rendered, through manipulation of Hamilton administrators and Art department faculty, an inefficient white elephant (or perhaps a dinosaur).

Murmurs from the Theatre and Dance Department reveal a recent, uncanny resemblance, though as of yet embryonic, between the condition of the performing arts and that of the studio arts. On stage, as well as in studio, students have suffered at the hands of a faculty and administration more concerned (or so it seems) with political infighting, backstabbing, ladder-climbing, and other charming parlor games than with the coherent, cohesive education of their students. The department majors, both in Theatre and Dance, are just now beginning to recognize and vocalize a discontent clearly related to the complaints emanating from art students for the past four years. Teaching quality is low, faculty tempers are high, and the students are put to the rack, as it were, and painfully stretched between the two extremes.

If the Theatre department and the Studio Art department represent, in that order, advancing stages of decay, the Music department is art after the fall. A complacent exterior coats a department which differs from the other arts in that it no longer strives to produce artists. The emphasis at the Homestead is the academic study of music, rather than the creative study of music—the education of musicologists, rather than the education of musicians. In studio art, and in theatre and dance, painters, dancers, ceramists, actors, designers, photographers and choreographers are struggling for survival. In the attenuated Music department, the academicians are content.

Most theories concerning the extinction of the dinosaurs attribute a causal relationship to environmental stress. Looking back on our perusal of the Hamilton art scene, do the recent whimpers bespeak (as Eliot's did) the encroaching wasteland? Can we look to the climate of campus attitudes for the disease-causing agent which afflicts the arts on the Hill?

The environment at Hamilton being one of liberal arts, there is always the argument that the training of the artist is detrimental to the spirit of a liberal arts education. With six academic goals to fulfill in the pursuit of the distributed, well-rounded ideal, it is said that there is little room for the demands of artistic nurturance. The environment at Hamilton being one participant in American culture, there is always the argument for the dubious educational value of art.

If we couple the liberal arts argument with a societal belief in the validity of academic pursuits, and a fervent mistrust of the seriousness and legitimacy of art in the learning experience, a theory may be found lurking somewhere in that understanding. Perhaps that theory can explain the desperate behavior of the faculty, administration, and students, or explain the enfeebled state of the arts at Hamilton. Perhaps, like the climactic factors once cited to explain the fall of the great lizards, ideological-environmental stress has in some way created an artistic wasteland at Hamilton.

There is no real answer (or, if there is, it is certainly not this simple); at this point, there is only the lingering question: should we do anything? After all, if the arts are withering in response to their ideological environment, it seems illogical to steel them artificially. Sometimes the thinking goes that in a time when art is not valued it should be left to fade, only to return when its absence has created a truer need. If the arts are dinosaurs on the eve of their destruction, doesn't it make sense to let them perish in their natural course?

Or maybe we are the dinosaurs; maybe we, willing to allow the decay of Hamilton's artistic programs, invite the wasteland which demands *our* extinction. What would Hamilton be like without the arts? Judging from the negligible attendance at concerts, plays, and recitals, and the small enrollment in art classes, some students already have a knowledge of life uninfluenced by art. They pass their time here working and drinking, unmindful of spiritual growth, and risking spiritual sterility. Yet even their lives are intertwined with the lives of other students who do have contact with the arts. The proper question, then, is: What would Hamilton be like without the arts and without the art students?

I fear that we will know sooner than we think; the dinosaurs grow weaker every day. ■

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Off the Record

WHAT DO old editors do when they no longer edit the newspaper? There is no set answer, but some of them (like me) go through a painful process of rematriculation. They start attending classes more often, making fewer excuses for their absences and for their frequent tardiness when it comes to getting assignments in on time. They are seen in Bristol less often, smile more often, and seem to have all the time in the world to offer you when before they could barely stop to give you the time of day. But, if you look closely, you can see in their eyes—particularly on Thursday nights, when instead of preparing for another all-nighter at The Spec they wander somewhat aimlessly around the Pub killing the urge to waft upstairs to see what this week's lead story will be—you can see that they feel like Khrushchev after he found out that he couldn't call anyone to prevent his ouster from power because all the phone numbers had been changed.

People must understand that former editors are somewhat unstable. In an attempt to resurrect some fading glimmer of the glory they once knew, erstwhile editors will often try to give you advice, frequently prefacing their remarks with "We covered this same problem a while back. Didn't you read our story about. . . ." And when you tactfully point out that it is no longer "our story," but someone else's, perhaps a tear will form in an eye that no longer looks down a nose at you, or has occasion to glare across a desktop at a dean or some other campus VIP while its owner asks menacing and penetrating questions like, "But isn't it a conflict of interest on your part to offer the building contract for the College's new bobsled run to your brother-in-law's second cousin?"

Deans don't talk to former editors. Their secretaries are instructed to notify them of upcoming appointments with these has-beens at least two weeks in advance so they can plan to be out of town that day. It is for these reasons that former editors rely on the friendship of those few people who will still talk to them to get through the one remaining semester before graduation, which brings us up to our next question.

What were editors doing when they were still editing?

This question is often phrased in expletive form, as in "What the hell were they doing?!" When I first assumed the editorship of this paper, I approached the task ahead of me with a naive optimism that sustained me through a long year of the typical highs and lows that every editor faces (at least all the ones I've known). Needless to say, I take my leave of this newspaper lacking that naivete which has borne me through the difficult times—that which has also buoyed me up to extremes of exhilaration when things have gone well. I bid it a fond farewell, somewhat thankful it is gone. After all, how many times have I set myself up for a fall by overestimating the ability of this newspaper (or any newspaper, for that matter) to effect some kind of change—either by drawing attention to a particular campus issue in a news article, by pointing out a new way of approaching an old problem in an editorial, or in some other way challenging a consensus at Hamilton that, in its conspicuous indifference, seems to proclaim that everything at Hamilton is OK?

Everything is not OK at Hamilton. I think everyone affiliated with the College sees something that he or she would like to see changed in some way, but how many try to *bring about* that change?

For some it is easier to try than for others. As a newspaper editor, one is vested with a unique opportunity to speak up, to voice an opinion in the form of an editorial to the community. Speaking up in such a public way necessarily becomes a responsibility: whether you agree with an editorial or not, you as a reader expect an editor to have some kind of opinion, and to express it responsibly.

This, then, is what I will cherish about my editorship: being an editor *forces* you to care about your community because you are compelled by your position to be outspoken. As an editor, you are constantly aware of what the community is doing—after all, it is your job to be reporting on community happenings. But you also become aware of what the community is feeling, or what you think it should be feeling.

Obviously, not everyone can be editor, and thus not everyone can share the experience of being forced to care. But not everyone needs that kind of motivation. I certainly did. When I think back on what kind of person I was when I came here, I know that if I had not become involved with this paper I would be leaving Hamilton as the same apathetic slob I was when I came. I would never deny that my desire to become editor was motivated by ambition (in fact, I would be suspicious of anyone running for editor for altruistic reasons); but I knew then that serving as editor would help me overcome my own indifference by asking me to eradicate that indifference in my peers.

ONE MIGHT ask why I have always placed a heavy emphasis on fighting student apathy in my editorials. One might even resent the didacticism that occasionally appears in them, aggravated by the holier-than-thou tone one perceives to be central to the theme. But didacticism was never my intention when I wrote about student ennui.

A college's *raison d'etre* is its students. Obviously, there would be little need for professors or administrators without them. A college newspaper that is edited by students has as its primary constituency the student body, especially at a small college where student activities make up a large part of the weekly news. Doesn't it make sense then that the primary thrust of our editorials should also be directed at the students? Sure, we can criticize the administration for their 20-20 hindsight or expose departmental feuding among the faculty, but ultimately it is the students, the lifeblood of any college, that must be reached if any lasting change is to be effected.

After serving as editor for a year, when one is constantly in touch with campus life, a healthy skepticism supplants that naive optimism with which all editors begin their terms—one hopes for the best while expecting the worst. Over one's four years at Hamilton one sees the same trends occurring year after year like a record that keeps skipping; one sees that the only way to avoid hurtful episodes like those happening every spring (at least since I've been here) is to avoid being lured into the convenient trap of indifference which this community sometimes seems openly to embrace. The image of a skipping record is particularly appropriate, I think, for it implies impeded progress and unnecessary repetition. I, for one, would really like to get off the record. ■

William T. Dentzer concludes his tenure as editor-in-chief of The Spectator with this magazine.

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